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Bachelors Wedding-Trip



BY
HIMSELF



A BACHELOR'S WEDDING TRIP.

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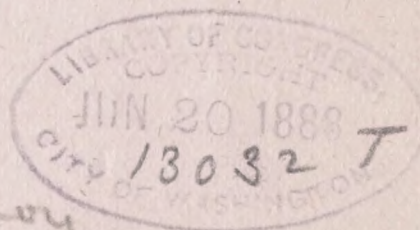
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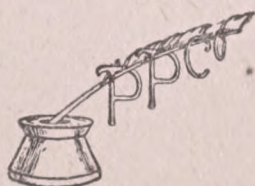
BY
HIMSELF



*Charles Pomeroy
Shearn*

"Those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage"

Merchant of Venice



PHILADELPHIA
THE PEN PUBLISHING COMPANY

1888

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TO THE UNMARRIED

AS INSTANCE OF THE BLISS WHICH MAY BE THEIRS

AND

TO THE MARRIED

AS REMINISCENT OF *THE* TRIP

THESE THREADED SKETCHES ARE FRATERNALLY

DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR

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THE APOLOGY FOR THE BOOK.

UPON the flames that licked the glowing logs; upon the wreaths of fragrant smoke that floated above my head, fair Theory sported in merry mood, while sombre Practice shrank abashed into a shadowed corner of the room.

“Hail, Queen of Hope!” I cried. “Show to me visions of that wedded life which thy sweet beckoning lures so many maids and men to seek with eager feet and hearts at bursting for the radiant prize.”

They came. But cold-eyed Practice said, “They are but air!” and darkening mists arose where all was light. And in them figures stalked—shapes of alloy—and Joy was dimmed; but on her brow one star shone pure and bright. A star? a face! Love lit the glorious eyes; and on their beams my soul was borne to heaven.

* * * * *

The fire was out: grey ashes in my hand; and Practice, close beside me, said again, “All was but air!”

Then Theory, wailing, cried, “Nay, 'tis not true! All was not air! Limn with thy pen the visions thou hast seen: voice with thy pen the whispered words of love, the tender, hidden thoughts mirrored for thy view; and they who read, comparing their own lives, shall cry with me, Love lives and reigns, the Monarch of the World! But Practice shook his head.

And so the Book was written.

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA, May 1, 1888.

A BACHELOR'S WEDDING TRIP.

CHAPTER I.

WHITHER?

I AM to be married. How, in the time long past, that fact—not thewed and sinewed as a fact near grown, but soft and rosy as a babe of thought—steeped all my mind, my inner self, and soul, in that soft, hazy light in which glad dreams are bathed. How like a mirage over the arid desert of my life, trembled and glimmered the vision of that bliss to be. Toiling over the parched and thirsty sands of this work-a-day world, how the cool and peaceful groves by the living springs of joy in that phantom world, lay luring and calm before my longing eyes; and as the months went on, and I drew near and ever nearer to its flower-decked loveliness, it did not vanish from my gaze, but took on newer beauties, showed me rarer flowers, cooled my fevered soul with the zephyrs from its peaceful glades, and nerved me on the way that led to its sweet heaven.

Yes, I am to be married. The day—shadowy, more distinct, now sharply cut—is here at hand, and, like a giant, awes my puny self with the immensity of its imminence. I sometimes think when I view the vastness of its brightness—I can not say, Jemima would not have me say, its shadow—I sometimes think how like the genie in the coffer that the lucky fisherman fished up from the sea, is this coming day. It was sealed within my maiden's heart with the sacred seal of her sweet modesty. Having won that heart from the cold depths in which it lay, and brought it up to the light and warmth of love, my purpose, held in five potent words, unlocked the seal, and the faintly spoken word became this

coming day, which, small and hardly seen, has spread and spread, until it fills the horizon of our lives.

Jemima—that is her name ; and is she not indeed my dove? —(her father's name is Job)—Jemima and I, sitting at one end—not at either end—of that most deliciously comfortable, high-backed, old hair-cloth sofa, against whose relegation, from its dim corner in the parlor, to the attic-limbo, we had successfully protested—oh, when will the march of improvement learn that old hair-cloth (when it isn't prickly), upon its softened springs, is better, far better, for engaged purposes, than high-sprung plush or silk?—Jemima and I, I say, sitting as aforesaid, had often speculated upon the coming Trip ; and latterly had consulted guide-books and time-tables, but without much success, for each route, as it newly presented itself to our inquiring minds, had seemed more pleasing than the last.

Now to see Jemima examine a guide-book or time-table or prospectus of travel, is simply delicious. With an air as if the fate of nations depended upon her administrative capacity, she bustlingly, yet determinately, removes all the books and pamphlets from the library table ; brings two chairs for herself and me ; places the shaded lamp at the further side of the table in the exact centre ; walks with decision to the book-case, and returns therefrom hugging to her breast a huge atlas, containing all the known and improvised countries of the world, her face, as serious as that of a child, appearing over the top, and lays it with a decisive drop on the table, where, spread out at the map of the world, it may form a geographical foundation for the superstructure of printed guides and finger-posts. Then she seats herself and says, " Now, John, bring them here ;" and the guide-books and time-tables are laid before her. Then is chaos come again ! She opens the books at all possible and impossible places—mostly impossible—and dartingly searches for the corresponding schedule, laying it outspread upon its open book, and patting both into quiescent flatness ; interspersing this preparatory work with preoccupied reproof, as " John, you *can't* get your chair any closer," and " John, now you really mustn't—this is business !" and " Oh !" (an interruption of speech) " you've made me " (another interruption) " lose my " (still another) " *place* ! John, if you don't stop, we'll *never* plan out the trip.—Oh, how I love you !" and a pair of arms that an

hourly might envy are flung around my neck. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself, John! Now be good and go to work"—and time-tables reign upon the throne of her mind.

As I lean back in my chair and smoke—smoking is allowed in the library—father Job's cigars are good—as I lean back and smoke, I gaze at her pretty bent head, and note how her nature's gold shines in the soft, brown waves that flow back from her low, fair forehead under the lamp's mellow light; note the perfect curves of shoulder and of bust, of rounded arm and slender waist; hear in my soul the beat of her tender, faithful heart, and know that every beat is for me; dream of the coming Day and of all days beyond, until my love so folds and guards her round, that never shall a sorrow pierce her lovely breast to wound the heart that lies so happy there.

However, as to the reachable part of the inhabited globe, we are in a state of chaos; and therein, as many times before, we found ourselves one evening, and therein I left Jemima.

Alone the next day in my office, I determine to wrestle with the problem myself.

My mental gaze instinctively turns toward Europe. "Been there once," says Memory. "Too expensive," cries Pocket. "Can't spare the time," suggests Business. Given up.

Before said gaze rise the peaks and plains of the Far West. Instantly vetoed by Pocket.

From the South long, quivering lines of heat radiate into the fevered air. "It might be as well to go where the position of principal performer at a funeral does not so surely await one of you," suggests Caution. Wherefore there is but one point of the compass left, the North.

Memory shows me frozen rivers, snow-buried plains, wintry cities, fur-clad inhabitants. But Expectation calls up rivers that grandly flow through forests whose leafy tops beckon to a summer sky; plains that lie yellow-green beneath a glowing sun; moonlit streets filled with gay life; summer vestments that but reveal the graceful forms transplanted from Gallic soil, and light that flashes from dark brown eyes, and the soft *tu toi* that falls from rosy lips (I am not married yet).

From the bare and echoing halls of the ancient mansion, in one room of which I sit, day by day, waiting for the litigious fly,

ghostly sounds come to my awakened mental ear. Light feet trip down the stairs to the music of gay laughter. The old mahogany doors swing open and short-waisted dames and girls walk in, upon whose white shoulders and arms the light from the candelabra falls soft and mellow, brightening youth and rejuvenating age. Chariots roll over the uneven pavement, and deposit their gay loads at the open door. Smiling guests bow and curtsy, and the strains of the minuet arise. The night grows old and dies, and the young day awakes in the brightening east. The chariots depart with their still gayer loads; but the guttering candles and drooping flowers of the feast remain; these too fade away, and I am alone. But as my eyes light upon the long rows of dry and musty books that stare at me from the walls, dreamy imagination again takes the reins. The skins upon the lettered backs grow soft and woolly, and the long-defunct sheep sport and gambol over a fairy sward.

The labored and neglected brief drops from my hand: the woes and virtues of Plaintiff, and the oppression and general rascality of Defendant, have no place in my mind: the North and our Trip thereto reign with absorbing sway: Inclination, Business and Pocket are for once agreed; Decision witnesses the contract, and I fly, in company with a green bag,* to oust Chaos from Jemima's mind, and to install therein orderly Purpose.

*In Philadelphia the lawyers still follow the old English custom of using cloth bags of various colors, generally green, in which to carry their books and papers.

CHAPTER II.

How ?

THE interrogation point having been successfully removed from Whither, How ? was a problem which, while being of lesser magnitude and not staring one in the face, yet loomed sufficiently tall and looked at one inquiringly. And having, in some measure, answered that look, leaving, however, the fiat for Jemima's yielding determined lips, I walked out Hickorynut Street toward the residence of my respected father-in-law-to-be ; and as I walked, I mused.

What, at the time, seemingly minute and unimportant things direct the whole character of a man, a community, a nation ! How unnoticed is the breeze which, blowing softly yet steadily, bends the leaf-burdened shoot, just starting into life, in that direction which its firmer growth follows unchangeably. Thus with the social life of this great City of Brotherly Love. Time was when two streets were laid out, and began to grow from the larger river toward the smaller ; the one that we call Arc, the other this Hickorynut. Upon the broad space of the one, the merchant princes of those days, whose purple was the sober grey of Friend, and whose carefully gathered gold was garnered in ground-rent and mortgage, built their great and melancholy houses and lived therein, their lives a reflex of their cold and rigid garments, and their motto—

“ The chief end of man
Is to keep all he gets
And get all he can.”

On the other, and fronting the State House and the Courts, the lawyers and other professional men built—or generally had built for them, and rented—their modest habitations, in which they and their educated spouses dwelled, using the first floors for their offices : and there they—or most of them—“ worked hard, lived well, and died poor.”

"Like father, like son" is not always the case, and some of the offspring of the aforesaid princes proved the exception. For here and there a young man clave not to the sad-colored "shad-belly," but donned "worldly" garments, and wildly dissipated, now and then, with a mug of ale and a pipe, or perchance a glass of wine from over the sea; and being, in such ungodly company, brought into contact with those children of the devil yclept lawyers, departed from the meeting-house traditions of his fathers, and began his damnation by listening to music—albeit that of hymns—in those buildings idolatrously called churches, presided over by "an hireling priesthood," and finished it by falling in love with and marrying a damsel "in the world"; and being thereupon, and promptly, cast out by his own people and "read out of meeting," hied him to the atmosphere of his father-in-law, and settled down into a respectable father of a family, with Episcopal and literary tendencies, although in (a branch of) the paternal trade.

And herer and therer a maiden eschewed the kerchief and poke-bonnet for ribbons and a feathered hat; and being likewise (but theoretically) cast out, learned to play the spinet, and married a denizen of Hickorynut Street, and brought her Quaker virtues and (after the death of her father) her Quaker pounds, to glad the heart of her lawyer husband.

Thus Educated (comparative) Poverty and Uneducated Riches spread and spread Westward in their respective localities on the South and on the North of the Market Street; and incomers to the town came and dwelt in the one or the other, according to their several bents. But Uneducated Riches, as they became comparatively educated, yearned to migrate Southward, and sometimes did, but not always to the satisfaction of their socially ambitious souls; for the Southrons oftentimes held themselves aloof, even to the second generation. But Educated Comparative Poverty, even when it became Comparative Riches, stayed where it was born, and flourished, content to eclipse its educated poorer neighbors.

As Educated Poverty became comparatively rich, and found its office-dwelling too circumscribed for its needs, or too plain for its desires, it moved its dwelling Westward, as I have said, but always on one narrow line, using its former habitation for its own and others' offices. Wherefore, and from the eager influx of

Comparatively Educated Riches, on social distinction bent, to this Hickorynut Street, it became in time the abode of those whose social place or aspirations were fortified with the wherewithal to maintain or further the same, and therefore the centre (or Mecca) of the social life of the town. And as time went still further on, and riches immigrated all around it, and advertised their presence with silks and satins, and bore those advertisements in new and shiny carriages behind new and gold-shiny steeds, Educated Comparative Poverty found itself very comparative indeed; but, far from acknowledging the fact, magnanimously (and joyfully) ate of the feasts provided by the immigrants, paying therefor, not in kind, but by the light of its countenance and countenance; which pay was received, not only with enthusiasm, but with gratitude; and was, by Comparative Poverty, accounted pleasing, as means of gratifying the senses, and economical, as lessening the domestic evening meal, and shrewd, as the fund, nurtured at the expense of the payee, was practically inexhaustible.

And as then, so now.

As I walk out the street, I pass by or near the residences of some immigrants now socially prosperous, whose souls recoil from the unwelcome ghosts of their immediate ancestors whenever they are by any mischance raised into conversational life, (their more remote, poor things! are not even possessed of so much of a ghost as lies in a mere name); but the lips of these immigrants halo these ghosts in the nimbus of time that has passed. And as I walk, some of these ghosts stand on fashionable doorsteps, or enter fashionable houses, or pass down fashionable side streets. Among them are several that I recognize. There is old McMortar, bearing the hod in which he transmuted the mixed lime and sand and cows' hair into the gold with which he built up for himself and his progeny a fortune, and so a name. And near him is the still older Malzhaus, with the odors of his brewery still clinging to his ancient garments, standing at the door of his offspring, the anglicized Malthouse. And passing him arm in arm, and bowing as they go, are the younger Yardstick and Purerye, whose children and children's children roll by in their carriages, but carefully avoid seeing them, almost grazing, as they pass it, a great dray, whereon the word "Manufacturers" is prominently lettered, upon which, beside the drayman in the flesh, sits the drayman in

the spirit, looking backward with pride upon the productions of his sons.

But, as I turn to look after the dray, what a funnily pathetic sight is before me. Comes striding up the street from his counting-room, Blockyourhatwhileyouwait, serenely fashionable; while at his elbow, but all unseen except by me—and perhaps by his son—the elder Blockyourhatwhileyouwait shambles obsequiously on, trying a shadowy new and shiny hat on his shadowy head (which seems to have all the sizes notched upon it) in the manner of his craft, and, apparently satisfied, pressing it upon the acceptance of his oblivious son.

Here, ringing the bell of a handsome house, is the deceased Nineoneman, carrying over his arm, as was his wont in youth, a just-finished suit of clothes, which will evidently fit his grandson. And as he stands waiting for the appearance of the liveried servitor, I. Parem, conscious of his financial and (therefore) social position, drives up, and stops for an afternoon call; and with him descends from the dogcart the ghost of Isaac Parem gone. As they ascend the steps, Nineoneman starts, and then, after fumbling in his diaphanous pocket for an instant, presents to the ghost Parem what I recognize as his "little bill," with an air as he would say, "I've found you at last!" Old Parem is disconcerted, evidently; but a bright idea soon suffuses his wrinkled countenance with a triumphant glow that extends even to the tip of his elongated nose, and makes the little snaky locks upon his partially bald old pate fairly wriggle with satisfaction. In his turn he fumbles in his pocket, and produces therefrom an ancient wallet, bulky with overmuch contents. This he opens deliberately, while Nineoneman eyes him somewhat aghast, and takes from it a soiled and much-worn promissory note, still attached to its protest notice, which, as he holds it before Nineoneman's nose, I can see is drawn payable to another than himself, though bearing Nineoneman's signature; and on the note is jotted in pencil, "discounted at 20 per cent." Old Nineoneman drops the bill and the clothes, which vanish, and makes a grab for the note; when the two ghosts grapple and, struggling, float off into space.

Oh ghosts that will not down, but rise, oft-times in workman's garb, to shame, *because ashamed*, your gold-buoyed posterity! How ye must look in homely scorn upon the hearts that would

disown the hands that raised them to their present eminence, or else would trick those hard and horny hands in ill-beseeming gloves of conjured rank and elegance!

But, to the praise of some of the living be it said, all ghosts are not besought to down, but have household altars raised for their worship and convenience. For, in the parlor of the McMortars, does there not stand a graceful vase of massive brass in shape like to the ancestral hod, filled with rarest flowers in propitiation of the spirit of the dead? And does not his famous (?) son descant upon the constructive ability of his first ancestor? Does not the graceful wife of the genial Malthouse turn with pride the spigot of the silver keg which, upon occasions of high state, is placed before her on the board, and serve therefrom the beer-soup of the departed's fatherland to her delighted (?) guests? And has not the courtly Blockyourhatwhileyouwait placed, as ornamental capping, over the largest mirror of his home, the ancient sign of the progenital shop, embellished with headgear done in tarnished gilt? Yea, verily: and thereby are the manes of these ancestors well happified, and therefore do they still the rattle of their sounding bones when sitting at the feasts of their rich progeny.

But all ghosts are not so well happified. I reach, as I walk, a carriage, upon the door-panel of which is emblazoned a coat of arms, quartered. Paternal, a lion, rampant, upon a field blanche. Maternal, a broom, couchant, upon a field blanche. As I stand for an instant, curiously inspecting the same, a courtly ghost walks leisurely down the street, and upon the breast of his long cloak, which is thrown gracefully over one shoulder, I see a lion rampant. His eye evidently catches the emblazonment, for he stops, and coming toward it (I step one side to give him room), looks at it intently. A scowl darkens his swarthy face, and he shakes his fist at the panel. He is gone; but in an instant reappears, carrying in one hand a shadowy pot of paint and in the other the ghost of a brush. He dips the brush in the paint and, with a bold hand, strikes across the emblazonment the dread bar sinister. A caustic smile then flits over his face, and he passes on.

Lucky it is for the owners of the equipage, I think as I likewise pass on, that it is not to the general world that that bar sinister is visible, but only to those able to see ghosts; and they, fortunately, are few.

But now I reach Jemima's door, and mount the broad, old-fashioned, marble steps, my hand on the narrow, curlyqueued, wrought-iron railing, and reach the old-fashioned door, white with the softened whiteness of innumerable coats of white paint, and am somewhat bespattered by men painfully cleaning, with sand and water, the marble trimmings of the old red-brick mansion. I wonder why the immortal William (not he of the plays—far from it!—but he who gained by courtly intrigues the principality wherein to establish his adopted brethren upon the principle that all men are free and equal), I wonder why he, if he did, set the custom of brick adorned (?) with marble? Perhaps to typify the palace and the plough. Perhaps to give the good housewives something, and yet not too much, to do. Perhaps—and yet perhaps he had nothing to do with it. Perhaps some one began to build with marble and was not able therewith to finish, and so eked out his desires and pocket with the cheaper brick, and his economic shift pleased his economic neighbors. Whatever the cause, the result remains: brick, with marble steps and trimmings—brick, with marble steps and more trimmings—brick, with marble steps and most trimmings—*ad infinitum et ad nauseam*. And how many an humble housewife or aristocratic housemaid must curse (in some feminine way) the everlasting marble, to be everlastingly rubbed and scrubbed and with powder whitened from May until November and from November until May!

Well, the walk from the office to Jemima's parlor, through all these alleys and by-ways of thought, has been over long. But as you sit with me, my reader, in the library firelight after dinner, and watch Jemima's animation as she plans The Trip to my objective point, the North, you will, with me, forget the prosiness of the way hither, and remember only, with her, that the journey of her life is to come.

"You see, John, we'll have plenty of time to catch the two o'clock train—that isn't the Limited, you know, for I must help you save from the very start—now I'm *sure* papa heard that; you mustn't so loud! Yes, we'll be really economical—those new parlor cars are so nice, you can get a whole section by buying six seats; and then with the curtains drawn front and back we shall be so cozy—now what are you smiling at? I wish you *would* stop making those absurd rings, just to see how far they'll float before

they break, and pay a *little* attention," and the pretty mouth begins to curve a little hurt.

"You darling," I say, as I fling my cigar into the fire and draw my chair near hers, taking good care to bring myself between her and *pater* and *mater familias* reading by the table, "you darling, you shall have two sections if you want them, and"—taking her hand in both of mine, as it lies on her knee—"we will have the curtains drawn, and you shall repose your head on my shoulder the whole——"

"Now, John, you're horrid! Shoulder indeed!" with a fascinating toss of her gold-brown head. "And then—" plunging into the former interest—"then we'll reach New York in good time for dinner, and the next morning we'll take the boat up the river to Albany, and there won't be any dust, and you can sit on the forward deck and smoke all day if you want to, you old dear"—with a little squeeze of my hand—"and I will sit with you"—the squeeze returned—"and the next morning we'll go by train to Whitehall, and then by boat down the lake, and then the St. Lawrence, and then Montreal, and then—oh John, won't it be lovely!"

"Lovely?" I cry, starting forward—and I think that in about one second more she would have been in my arms, father and mother Job notwithstanding, if a dry cough from behind a magazine at the library table had not brought me back to reality and nineteenth-century manners.

"Papa," said Jemima, finely rendering the conversation general, "how did grandpa and grandmamma take their wedding trip?"

"Well, my dear," said father Job, slowly coming over—"take a fresh cigar, John. Well, my dear, they didn't have sections——"

"Oh, papa, you haven't been listening," she cried, with the mist of tears in her voice, "you surely haven't been listening?"

"No, no, I assure you," replied he with emphasis. "No, my dear, I had been reading about sections and curtains——"

"Oh papa!"

"And such things, that's all. No, your grandfather and grandmother didn't have those convenient accessories to solitude, they only had your great grandfather's light carriage and pair, and made the journey to New York in two days."

"Then for two whole days they were a—" cried Jemima, and stopped short.

"Lone, my dear," supplied father Job gravely, while mamma Job shouted, and I joined in as heartily as a certain sheepish sense of mental complicity would allow.

"And then," he continued, patting her on the head, "they left their horses in New York, and took a trip of a week or so on a fast passenger boat on the Erie canal, to see the country, and came back to New York, and so home."

"Oh, wasn't that delightful, mamma!" cried Jemima. And when the elders had retired—which they sometimes considerably did early—she and I talked on in the firelight of the journey that was to be for us alone, yet never lonely; of the longer journey of which that was to be the type, whereon we two—and in both our thoughts, perhaps, we, more than two—should journey, till, both past the bounds of Time, our way should lie thus, hand in hand, along the pleasant paths of vast Eternity.

CHAPTER III.

How.

"JOHN," said Jemima, an evening or two afterwards, "would you like to look at Algy Smitten's letters before I burn them?"

"No, my dear," I replied, with an emphasis that I tried to make sound magnanimous, "no, that little episode belongs to you and Mr. Smitten—it is your property—and as I wouldn't care to have him triumphantly peruse my letters, if you should jilt me, I will do as I would be done by, and his letters shall be resolved into their constituents—gaseous, mostly—without my inspection."

"And you won't feel even the least bit jealous hereafter—you'll believe that I didn't love him the least little particle?" she said, coming close to me, and laying her two small hands on my shoulders, and looking up at me with anxious, love-lit eyes. "You *know*, dear, that I love you with all my heart and soul, and that I never have—" but the rest of the sentence was smothered in my arms, and her lips were otherwise employed than in talking.

The Smitten affair had always troubled me a little—at least until I had learned to read my dear girl's heart thoroughly; then I was troubled no more, except by a small heart-ache when I thought that any one had ever been in a manner licensed to love her, even though that love had not been returned—even although brother Smitten had been tearfully, yet firmly, given his *congé* soon after I appeared upon the scene. As it was, I felt rather a friendly pity for Smitten, as for one who, filled with high emprise, had gallantly attempted to storm the beleaguered city, only to be beaten back with sundry wounds and bruises, the garrison having refused to capitulate. But I fear that he cherished for me somewhat of the rancor that the aforesaid defeated stormer might have felt toward a relief party to whom his defeat had been largely due.

Now Jemima's question as to Smitten's letters unlocked sundry small closets in my memory, and several ghosts walked out, with more or less unpleasant clatter of their dry bones, holding in

their extended bony hands, some letters, some photographs, some odds and ends of faded flowers or half-worn gloves or bits of ribbon or dainty handkerchiefs, as challenging my attention and upbraiding my forgetfulness. Wherefore I resolved to, and shortly after did collect these various mementos, and sat me down before my blazing fire, to cast upon its pyre of logs the relicts of dead memories.

How hard it is to totally destroy these little links that bind us to a tender past! How this small glove recalls the hand it once so daintily encased; recalls the clinging pressure of that hand—the moonlit nights sweet-laden with the breath of sleeping flowers, and vocal with the insect voices which but accent the stillness that lies brooding over all the land. How this pressed wild flower brings to mind the walk across the grassy fields, and what we said and looked on that bright summer day. This once gay knot, all worn and crumpled now, the trophy of the hard-fought fight that won the belle of all the ball, and bore her in the mazes of the waltz from eager hands that claimed her. These letters—ah, these letters! Burn them all—letters and glove and flower and crumpled knot! How the flames curl over them! How they seem to stretch out shadowy arms, calling for help from a once loving heart! Burn them all! So shall the past be swept from out my life, to leave the present and the future clean and clear for the footsteps of the only one whose right it is to walk therein—a queen.

Thus it was that I began to put my bachelor life in order—to settle up its bankrupt estate, that with the one piece of gold rescued from its faults and follies, I might start anew—a Benedict.

Jemima had had many beaux who had yearned, I knew, to blossom out into full-blown and accepted lovers. But of these she rarely spoke; and I, even I, did not know, except by inference, to whom the, for them, fateful No had been said. For this, she said, was their secret, not hers; and I honored her for her reticence.

I arrived one evening, as was my wont, at father Job's, and was met by Jemima with an air of perturbed resolve. After the hair-cloth sofa had gathered us within its comfortable old arms, I asked the occasion of that air.

"Well, dear," she nervously replied, "I am afraid that—the fact is—perhaps our trip——"

"What?" I cried. "Surely our trip isn't to be given up?"

"Oh, no! Not as bad as that," she said. "But Aunt Eunice and Aunt Hepzibah and Uncle Robert are with papa and mamma in the library, and—oh, John, they want to go, too!" and she buried her face on my shoulder.

"Never!" I exclaimed. "What, take those three old——"

"John!"

"Those three respected antediluvians with us upon our first journey into the risen world? Never! My dear, notwithstanding a profound admiration for your aunts and uncle, I won't—I simply won't!"

"Now John, be a good boy for my sake,"—how could I withstand that caressingly pleading voice!—"and perhaps it will be all right. You know they love us both——"

"I wish they would moderate the excess of their affection until, say, a month after our marriage," I moodily interjected.

"John, that isn't right," she said. "They do love us. And Aunt Eunice is to give us a grand piano, and Aunt Hepzibah a pony and phaeton, and then they'll make such valuable god-mothers, and——"

"My love!!"

She turned quickly, and caught my laughing eyes. Over her look of blank inquiry swept a crimson flood from neck to brow. "Oh, John! I didn't—" and with one pathetic, reproachful, horror-stricken glance, she dashed from my side and fled away up into the library, I following.

There they all were—father and mother Job, and the two aunts, and Aunt Hepzibah's husband—and them I greeted with a smile on my lips, but rage in my heart.

"Good evening, John," said Aunt Hepzibah—how I wished they didn't regard me quite so intimately—"I'm so glad you have come. Eunice and I have been talking all winter of taking a trip together next summer—" husband Robert was uniformly left out of the account by Mrs. Hepzibah in all questions of his own volition—"and we have just concluded that nothing could be pleasanter than to make you and Jemima of the party, and all go together after the ceremony,"—with an authoritative smile, as who should say, "I like you, and am willing, and will, that you accompany me."

"We really are very much obliged," I replied, sitting down beside Jemima, "but——"

"My dear fellow," said husband Robert, "there are——"

"Robert!" warningly interposed Aunt Hepzibah. "As I was saying, John, there are no buts. Eunice and I will be delighted to have your company, won't we, Eunice?"

"Certainly," replied Aunt Eunice, with her silver trumpet at her ear—or rather her lips were supposed to say "certainly," for only an attentive listener ever heard what Aunt Eunice said, as, like most extremely deaf persons, she spoke very low, her words lying rather in her intention than in her vocal act.

"But—" I again commenced; when the gentle pressure of Jemima's hand on my arm pleaded with me to accede, and I surrendered. So, with as good a grace as I could command, I said, "It will give us great pleasure;" and Jemima's eyes rewarded me.

And so, with a multiplicity of suggestion—husband Robert's invariably squelched—our route to the North—I insisted, with the despair of a drowning man, upon the North—was settled, and Jemima and I escaped to the hair-cloth sofa.

There we bewailed our vanished dreams, our ruined plans, our dual life alone amid the hurrying crowds, upon the moonlit rivers, over the sunny plains, through the shadowed forests. There we vowed to dwell as much apart upon the coming trip as our enforced companionship would permit, and there we comforted each other back to happiness. So that when the good-night kiss was left on either lips to breathe its sweetness through our dreams, we both looked forward to a journey that even unasked companions could not mar.

CHAPTER IV.

MARRIED.

THE months have narrowed into weeks, the weeks have dwindled into days, the days have shrunk into hours, and the last night of bachelor life is here. And like him who with the morning light is to set out on his journey to another world, I sit down in my dismantled room to view the life that has passed and to think upon that which is to come. How solemn is the change, how full of awe! How can a man who, on the morrow, is to join to his hitherto separate life another life, for good or evil, for weal or woe, until death the two shall part, think lightly of the change, and go thereto as to some transient holiday? Another life, another soul, another's hopes and fears and joys and sorrows to be so welded to his own, that but one life shall stand before the world, shall make the place called home, shall kneel before its God. Upon his shoulders shall the dual burden fall; yet not on his alone, but part on hers; she who to him gives up herself, her very self and soul, that he may mold it—how? God grant for happier life while here with him, and happiest life with him beyond this world!

And yet how like a bubble is our happiness! It rises, glowing iridescent in the sun, and floats gay, buoyant, graceful as a happy thought, upon the summer breeze. A puff of harsher wind—'tis gone; and but a drop—its bright self all a tear—falls in the dust, is grimed and fouled, and disappears. Then let us keep the harsh winds from our happiness, that it may float, sun lit, upon the air of love.

The clocks are racing as I muse. This quick, short beat upon my mantel-shelf; the slow and ponderous tick down in the hall, and neither slow nor quick that in a neighboring room. And ever and anon they beat in unison one stroke of sound, then move away upon their separate paths; and yet they all mark out the self-same steps of time. A little world of hurrying steps or slow, of placid lives or lives that eager run—all to the self-same goal. And

I am one and she is one. And yet if our paths lie not too far apart, but ever and anon join in one common road, perhaps when they both leave the stones and dust of earth to cross the azure arch to that fair, flowery world, the way across that arch may be a common road, and they be one about that farther sphere.

THE morning has arrived, and the signal service has kindly given us a superb day, not too hot, and one that is vouched to have no drop of rain. It is entirely unnecessary to say that I am up early, and also that I am somewhat flustered, and also that I finish packing with a nervousness that I inwardly comment upon unfavorably (to put it mildly), and also that I am at Jemima's door entirely too soon to do anything but hang about in the parlor, utterly ignored by the feminine portion of the family, although I do catch whiffs of attention from father Job. I wander around among the presents, and speculate upon the possibility of using eight clocks where we shall probably have place for but five at the very utmost, and whether it will do to have the preserve spoons changed four or five times during one meal, so as to render it perfectly obvious to a guest that we have the number here spread out. I then bethink me of the prayer-book—I had given Jemima a prayer-book, the covers of which were plates of silver hinged to a silver back—and send off a messenger to ascertain whether the minister has received it, although I am perfectly certain that he has. And just as I have paced the parlor for the forty-second time by count, the ushers and my best man arrive, and, although I beg hard for just a glimpse of my bride, I am not allowed, but am packed off in a carriage, and roll over the stones toward the realization of my dreams.

As I stand by the altar railing (we are a little ahead of time), I see my darling float up the aisle like an angel in a flowing cloud; note how all the cherubs on the vaulted roof turn their eyes toward her lovingly as she comes, and think that the palms in the hands of the angels upon the chancel wall are extended in benison upon our bliss.

Then over my inmost soul surge the waves of a perfected love, and madly beat upon my heart; until, "Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," falls like the "Peace, be still," upon those rolling waves, and MY WIFE'S hand lies in mine.

CHAPTER V.

THE PROGRESS BEGINS.

WE are at the Broad Street Station. Adieus *ad infinitum*, and trembling upon the verge of *ad nauseam*. Flowers galore. Candy likewise. The gates open, and by a wise dispensation, if not of Providence, then of the railway company, only our immediate party is admitted by the liveried seneschal, and we board the parlor car, *en route* to New York. A chaos of satchels, wraps and umbrellas, gradually resolved into orderly disposal beside the several chairs of the several owners, and into racks. The bell-rope whistle sounds its distant and asthmatic squeak, and the train moves slowly from under the glass and iron of the spanning roof, out upon the network of tracks; roars over the river, and The Journey is begun.

As Jemima sinks wearily back in her chair, she casts an eye upon our party's belongings, animate and inanimate, and a pathetic little smile, just wetting its feet in the margin of tears, hesitates upon her pale lips, doubtful whether to go or stay.

"Hubby dear—" it is the first time! Ye gods of love and longing! How I yearn to take her in my arms and call her by the dearest name on earth—my wife! But traveling proprieties are all around us, and I can only lean forward, as I sit facing her, and, under pretense of arranging something, secretly press her hand. "Hubby dear," (with a little blush), "does this remind you of the journey we had planned?"

"No—" leaning still farther forward, under more pretense of arrangement—"my darling, my sweet little wife!" Straightening up again—"No, I must say it does not. It resembles it about as much as the garish pleasures of a royal progress must resemble the quiet pleasures of travel *incog*."

"Oh, that is it!" she says, with the animation of an inspiration, "that is just it! We will call this journey our wedding Progress: for isn't Aunt Hepzibah Lord High Chamberlain; isn't Bolus Master of Ceremonies; isn't Uncle Robert General Factotum, and isn't Victorine Lady in Waiting?"

"And aren't you the Queen?" I (softly) cry.

"And you my King?" she answers, while the happy tears rise for an instant in her eyes.

(The indulgent reader will pray pardon the relation of this little conversation, remembering that we were new to the business, so to speak, and therefore not so strictly accountable for our words. If you have been long married, suppress the caustic smile for the sake of the time when you were likewise new—when familiarity had not bred contempt. And if you have not yet entered the state into which we had been ushered that day, suppress the incredulous smile, knowing that there is such a thing as love, and that its new fruition must find vent in looks and words that to the outer world seem kindred to inanity.)

Well it was indeed a Progress! Behold our officials: *Imprimis*, always *imprimis*, Aunt Hepzibah, autocratic, authoritative, her little tight ear-knots of smooth gray hair but accenting her self-assumed and reverently accorded position of leader. Secondly, Uncle Robert, affecting to be independent, really subservient; his large-man's head wagging upon his little-man's body, in would-be contentment with all the world. Thirdly, his valet, to whose plebeian surname of Jones, ambitious but unkind parentage had prefixed Heliogabalus; who steadfastly refused the whole imperial length of his name; who resented with quick scorn the colloquial Gab, and who insisted upon the shorter and longer Bolus (as easier of pronunciation than Balus): calm and serene, he moved amid the most exasperating distractions of travel with an imperturbable rigidity of neck that not even the stiffness of his collar could have wholly imparted. Fourthly, Aunt Eunice, who, when not quietly fishing with her trumpet for strays and waifs of sound, sat placidly reading or regardful, as her mood might be, ever and anon speaking with her lips, not her voice, with fine disregard of circumscribing noise or the distance of the intended listener; and whose silvery hair fell, smooth and soft, on either side of the face of an unconscious saint. Fifthly, Victorine, her maid, (Aunt

Hepzibah scorns maids), a feminine contrast, on wires, to Bolus's planted solidity. Sixthly, Jemima, now passively, now actively happy—always happy, dear child—with the womanly childishness that moved one (one, I say,) to toss her up toward the ceiling, or fondle her in his arms, or humbly bow before her lovely worth and purity. And seventhly, the narrator.

We fly across level and monotonous Jersey; roar through the old towns, restful and stagnant; are sprung upon by the new, whose gingerbread architecture bespeaks the ephemeral present, and reaching the terminus, Jersey City, are paddled across the ferry to the larger New York; plunge into a maniac crowd of hackmen; are seized by the most vociferous; are whirled and jolted away past ill-smelling wharves and worse-smelling markets, and boarding the five o'clock boat for Providence just in time, the gang-plank is pulled ashore; the mighty engine breathes into life, and we steam out upon the broad North River. We round Castle Garden, that ancient theatre, with its immigrant-haunted Battery, and work our way up the crowded East River and under the spanning wires of the Bridge. And as the great steamer forges through Hell Gate, I tell Jemima, who is sitting by my side on the forward hurricane deck, how, in my grandfather's day, the travelers from the Nutmeg State to the great City left their sloops at the entrance of the dreaded passage, and kneeling on the grassy bank, prayed for the safety of the vessel on her journey through, boarding her again when it had been happily accomplished.

Supper, with its (comparative) creature comforts, follows; and, as the sun goes down behind the low and distant shore of the quiet Sound in a glory of crimson and gold, tingeing the long lines of gently-swelling waves, and the twilight deepens into night, by a process of natural selection the boat's company on deck pairs; and as night fairly lowers its pall over us, timid females are guarded against its terrors by the strong arms of their companions of the braver sex. And one young couple—whom elderly married women have been watching with a retrospective and softening smile—snuggle away into a specially dark corner by the paddle box.

That a fog is maliciously impeding navigation, the roar of the whistle and the soft and distant boom of the fog-bells tell us, till whistle and bells roar and boom in dreams; when the rattle of

cordage and the tramp of feet and the shock of the vessel against the wharf, recall me from an excursion across the open polar sea in a ship whose motive power is a whistle and whose sails are flattened bells, and we are at Providence.

To say that Aunt Hepzibah had not been wearying during the journey hither would be to tell a most decided untruth. When our state-rooms were being allotted to us soon after leaving New York, we discovered, to our inexpressible dismay, that she had telegraphed for the bridal for us. Jemima, I am proud to say, absolutely refused to occupy that palatial and advertising domicile, and resolutely held out against Aunt Hepzibah's commands and Uncle Robert's entreaties, so that they were forced to occupy it themselves, we taking their abandoned state-room. Consequently they were the cynosure of all noticing eyes, the more so from their age. Whereas Jemima and I, by preconcerted arrangement, entered our state-room as occasion required—and occasion was required as seldom as possible—in, we hoped, such an unconscious manner as would lead all beholders to at once imagine that we had been married for years, if not for ages, and were, if anything, chaperones for our elderly friends; in which belief we hugged ourselves, enjoying the conscious discomfiture of Uncle Robert—nothing could upset Aunt Hepzibah.

Bolus's behavior during the trying altercation which preceded our final disposal, excited my admiration. Cold and immovable, he conveyed our belongings from the bridal abomination, whither he had at first carried them, to our won resting-place, allowing no glimmer of interest to commit him to either side, whereas Victorine had instantly taken up the cudgels against us.

"Whyfore ees eet zat Ma'm'selle—*mille pardons! madame*—whyfore should *madame* not accommodate herself of zis *appartement, si magnifiquement meublé?*" she cried. "Zis one here vill make to pass ze time *plus agréable pour madame!*" and tone, and gesture of hands and particularly of shoulders, added to her entreaty. But, as I have said, commands and entreaties were of no avail to move Jemima—I, except for encouraging glances, held wisely aloof—and she had her reward, if reward it was, in a somewhat greater number of kisses when the closed door of our stateroom first shut us in from the traveling world.

What a palatial caravansary in barbaric style is a Sound steamer! What a wealth of gilding and red cotton plush, and what a poverty of taste! What an aggregation of individualities does it contain, each much more accented than if conveyed by the uniforming railway! It is a hotel cut off from all the world, wherefrom the guests can not escape, even for an hour, to other scenes and amusements, but are thrown upon the silent society of each other for interest and occupation. Behold those who, from absence of romance or of congenial company, choose the flaring and stuffy cabin and the enlivenment of paper-covered literature, rather than the fresh and seaey decks and the sound of the waves cloven by the sharp and rushing prow or beaten into flattened foam by the unresting wheels. And by these, mostly, sit their humdrum spouses, likewise literarily absorbed.

Others there are who hunt (in couples) for the farthest removes from light and company, and, mere shades upon the dusk of night, blend two into an almost one, reluctantly yielding to Propriety when she commands the hour of separation.

Others again there are who sit in accompanied solitude upon the forward deck, and, distinguishable by the intermittent glow of their cigars, think perchance of one from whose presence, if by their side, loneliness would flee, and whose dear companionship would fill the erst slow-winged hours with dread of their all too hurried flight.

What a world within a world! and within that smaller world, in what a world of newborn hopes and joys do two late-comers dwell!

Providence lies before us, a silhouette against the sunrise. Here, in the fresh air of the morning, the bustling pier. Beyond, the glassy river-harbor, upon the tinted waters of which are placidly riding vessels of high and low degree, whose tapering spars and rigid ropes and raking funnels and long, black hulls are likewise silhouettes against water and sky. Beyond again, the sleeping town, just wakening into life. The houses rise up the hill, black and dead on this side, with here and there a window blazing as if from fire within, and a sloping roof just touched by the rising sun, while, conspicuous among all, the great dome of some public building stands against the face of the sun, black below, and shading into grey and crimson toward the top.

"Where do we breakfast in this place?" breaks in the voice of Aunt Hepzibah, as Jemima and I stand on deck viewing the scene.

"I 'ave been hinformed, ma'am," says the accompanying Bolus, "that the Narragansett is the honly 'ouse to which your ladyship would care to go."

Now Bolus's English was faultless, except that he would drop or add his h's upon all wrong occasions, and likewise insisted upon ennobling Aunt Hepzibah when addressing her, as evidence, perhaps, of the quality of his employers, before honoring this benightedly democratic country with his presence.

"I have heard," interposes Uncle Robert, "that the——"

"We will breakfast at the Narragansett, Bolus," says Aunt Hepzibah, transfixing Uncle Robert with a glance. Whereupon we proceed to the cabin to collect our traps, where we find Victorine shouting into Aunt Eunice's ear-trumpet that Bolus is her beast black; from which amiable expression of opinion she, glancing at Bolus's angrily imperturbable countenance, desists, gathering up Aunt Eunice's belongings in a whirlwind of furious service. From which little episode Jemima and I opine that the journey thus far has not cemented the friendship of the two servitors.

Breakfast over, Jemima and I, leaving the elders to repose, hire a buggy and drive down Westminster Street, and over the Providence River, and up the steep hill of College Street, passing the court-house on the way, a handsome, castellated structure, standing on the hillside and overlooking the lower town. Then, entering that portion where wealth and taste seem most to predominate, we come to the Brown University, and so on to and out upon the terrace, a sort of esplanade at the top of an almost perpendicular descent, and look out over the city.

At our feet lies the river, winding down through the town to the harbor, edged with shops and warehouses, and bridged in many places. And by it, and near a little park, is the railway station. Beyond, the city rises again, on a gentle elevation, toward the country and a distant line of low hills; while behind us, on the abrupt heights, the gardens and mansions beautify this portion, and spread away along the side of the narrow valley.

Driving down again, we recross the river, and at first rattle, and afterwards whirl away in a cloud of dust, in the direction of Roger Williams Park, which proves to be a new but pretty

breathing-place out toward the country ; and we, toward the support thereof, eat ice-cream at the restaurant. Off again by country roads, we reach the reservoir and pumping-station—the former square and turf-covered, and the latter of brick, and puffy—and leaving these, drive back by another and prettier road, dine with our relatives, and at 1.50 are seated in the Boston and Providence train *en route* for Boston : when heat and sleep soon overcome our youngest, who, her head in the corner of her seat (she has resolutely refused my shoulder) presently looks like a shiny, dusty baby.

CHAPTER VI.

MATTAPOISETT, AND THE PROFESSOR.

A DUSTY glimpse of Boston; a hot, grimy, on-the-rough-and-ragged-edge-as-it-were glimpse of Boston, and we are jolted from the Boston & Providence Depot to that of the Old Colony, and thence whirled through factory towns, through farms, through villages, through pine forests, over salt marshes, past glimpses of the white sand of some antediluvian and much "left" seashore, and up to the rickety station of Mattapoissett and the waters of Buzzards' Bay. A transfer from rattling iron to more rattling wooden wheels, and the one street of the queer old town is reached, is rattled and dusted through, and the stage draws up at the door of a house that might have been built by a Noah of New England tendencies.

In the far-away time when whales were plentiful, and so kindly disposed toward their fellow-mammals as to burn to furnish them with light, the profitters by their courtesy—to wit, the seafarers who did most cultivate their acquaintance and sought them, even afar, to save them the trouble of coming to land to be cut up and boiled—espying the quiet and comparatively sheltered shores of Buzzards' Bay (probably so called because buzzards were there unknown), established themselves thereon, and called the place of said establishment Mattapoissett, although how they could have so far erred as to adopt the quaint, musical and appropriate Indian name, instead of, say, Ocean View (the ocean being invisible from that shore), is, in the light of the present day, hard to imagine. But then, there were no excursionists to be beguiled.

Having so and there established themselves, they built for themselves houses as nearly like their whalers as possible, in that they were water-tight—being shingled from roof-tree to foundation, and compact—every available inch saved; and as much unlike as possible, in that they were clean. But this last might have been due to their wives.

In process of time the whales, beginning to doubt the advisability of further oily benevolence, absented themselves—those who had not previously been absented—from the region and even from

the distant neighborhood ; wherefore oil absented itself from the whalers' boilers and consequently money from their pockets, they either followed the whales, or other callings, or more sensibly died, and Mattapoissett was left alone with its tenantless houses and deserted wharves and useless breakwater and (one) ruined general storekeeper.

In further process of time a sharp Yankee, who to his native sharpness had added, like the balmy oil upon the penetrating vinegar, Boston culture—making of himself, thereby, a very good salad, he being naturally crisp—fishing for dollars where maybe his ancestors had fished for whales, sailed, so to speak, to Mattapoissett, and bought the whole town, it is said, for about four thousand dollars, presumably of the ruined general storekeeper, much as he would have bought up the protested and “outlawed” notes of the dead-and-gone whalers.

Finding the houses in a perfect state of repair, and disguising some of them in cultured paint, he sold two to two æsthetic friends for about two thousand apiece, and inhabiting the best one left of the lot, gazed complacently upon the remainder of the town as so much pure profit.

And so, gentle reader, having been thus introduced to the town, shake hands with our host and hostess, and enter with us the aforesaid Noachian residence, and gaze upon this sofa direct from the Ark, via the Boston of a century ago and a whaler's cabin. Ditto sideboard. Ditto chairs. Ditto looking-glass with gilded impossible knobs in gilded impossible places on a gilded impossible frame. Observe these green paper Biblical window-curtains, upon which a blue David is smilingly, yet pensively, chopping off a yellow head from a red Goliath before a background of white Israelites with purple spears. Walk over this hall-floor and up these stairs, all painted a beautiful blue, thickly bespattered with white, as doubtless representing the time when, with a wet sheet and a flowing sea, their sometime owners danced over the foaming billows after the festive whale.

How we were all stowed in that one house is difficult to comprehend, except by bearing in mind that the house, retaining to a remarkable degree, evidently, the sea-faring proclivities of its departed builder (whose last voyage was the longest he ever made, inasmuch as he sailed thereon to Eternity), must have assisted its

human cargo in said stowing, thereby rendering it possible for seven persons to occupy the space ordinarily accorded to four. For occupy that space we did, to the inextinguishable wrath of Bolus, whose thoughts probably turned with longing to the 'alls of the haristocracy which he, by his own rather foggy—and therefore thoroughly English—account, had been used to frequent. For the grandeur to which the Englishman who makes this country the scene of his struggles for a livelihood has invariably been accustomed, whether as proprietor or guest in the drawing-room, or servant in the servants' 'all, is, or is meant to be, to our democratic minds, awe-inspiring and wonder-striking. In my own limited experience I have found it profitable to divide the sum of such an account by two, and often by four, and then to materially qualify the remainder. It is more soothing to my knowledge of my own possibilities than to at once, and voluntarily, shrink into the utter nothingness into which the relator would have me.

It seems that, in the attic, a room had been prepared for Bolus and Victorine, divided by a combination of sheets hung from the roof-tree and tacked to the floor and reaching the door (which opened outward) in the centre thereof. And this arrangement was apparently not pleasing to the modesty of Victorine, from the account which I overheard her give Aunt Eunice the next morning, with a perfect bubble of shoulder.

“*Oh Madame,*” said she, “eet vas terrible! I permit my candle to eetself place upon a chaire. *Madame, je vous assure,* zere ees no—vat you say—*tiroir* there—no nossing. I commence to dishabillate me. At zis moment zat *bête anglaise* entaire into his side of ze *appartement*. During some time I no notice nossing. *Alors, mon Dieu!* at last I see to appear hees *détestable* shade upon ze *curtaine*! And zen I tink *a l’instant* zat *my* form also ought itself to appear upon ze same *curtaine*, during ze time zat I dishabillate myself. And zat *de même* he it had seen! I myself throw to ze floor! I implore—I ordaire him to leaf ze *appartement*, and zen himself to dishabillate in ze obscurity, to end zat I might not be enforced to regard hees form *détestable*. Do you tink, *Madame*, zat he obey? Do you tink he haf in hees soul ze—how you say?—ze *noblesse* of ze *véritable gentilhomme*? *Non, Madame!* He laf—he laf only—and I am forced to blow ze candle, and to arrange *mes cheveux*”—but here I deemed that a

discriminating listener had best depart, that the mysteries of Victorine's toilet be not exposed to a masculine ear. Victorine and Bolus were apparently not made for each other.

After supper Jemima and I went down to the ancient and ruined pier and, sitting on one of its massive stones, looked over the little harbor as it broadened into the bay; and our thoughts, followed seaward, until the waves seemed to toss and the spray to fall at our feet, and the uneasy plain to stretch away toward the sun-rising. Great clouds loomed up upon the misty horizon line, piling their giant masses in the air, as if a mountain world had risen from its buried slumber in the deep, and all the water on its rocky peaks had changed to glittering snow in that high altitude. Summit on lower summit rose, until the sky was piled to heaven with peaks, while silent valleys lay between, that seemed as if their hidden beds must smile in summer greenery and summer flowers. And as the setting sun shone full upon this magic world, the mountains glistened from their snowy sides, and valleys beamed in sunny radiance. And as the glow shone bright with golden tints, and was suffused with crimson's deeper hue, the peaks blushed red beneath the sun-god's gaze, and gold-capped domes showed where far hidden cities lay.

"Dear," she said—and my arm tightened around her waist as we sat on the lonely pier and watched the growing wonder of the clouds—"if we could only walk that watery plain and reach those happy cities, would you go—if I went too?"

"You know too well I would, if you went too," I answered, "for who would not escape, if those he loves could also go, from this world of ours, where we must grow old—and die. And many try, in one way or another, to reach some Happy City, but how few succeed. Would you like to hear a little poem that the sea and the clouds and the far-off cities call to my mind?"

"Yes," she said, as she leaned against me with that soft restfulness that women show to those they love, and her gaze went out again toward the slowly darkening clouds.

"Then I will tell you how fares

THE BATTLE OF LIFE FOR THE MANY.

I lie upon the sandy beach:
Beyond, a scarcely moving reach

Of bar-locked water, then the whitened line
 That marks the troubled shallows of the brine.
 Again beyond, the Ocean's mighty breast;
 Again beyond, vast clouds upon it rest—
 Huge, looming mountains, snow-capped cloudy peaks,
 Bright smiling valleys where the sunlight seeks
 The domes and spires of far-off cities hid
 The summits of each cloudy range amid—
 Domes that shine golden, spires of ruddy hue—
 Oh Fairy Cities, take me unto you!

I cross the sands, I breast the peaceful reach,
 I gain the billows of the barrier beach—
 Oh God, they crush me! Help!—The awful war
 Upon this seeming narrow wave-swept bar!
 Dragged struggling down—swept fainting to and fro—
 The unrelenting surges o'er me go!—
 But now an outward tide—oh, could I gain
 The quiet bosom of the mighty Main,
 And float, upheld upon that peaceful breast,
 Out toward those glowing Cities of the Blest!

* * * * *

*A corpse floats out upon the quiet Main;
 The Cities vanish into cloud again;
 And youthful hopes and manhood's earnest strife
 Fade, like the sunlight, from the sea of life."*

For a moment she sat motionless; then turning toward me with a long, shuddering sigh she said, "John, will your life—will our lives end like that? Shall we be always striving and striving, only to end in disappointment and the grave? Oh, John—" with growing excitement—"they must not—they shall not! One Happy City we shall reach—we have reached—the City where Love dwells; and shall we not, all our lives, dwell there too?"

"Yes, darling," I said, as I drew her closer to me, "we have reached that Fairy City, on the borders of the great Sea of Life, and therein we will dwell. And if we ever set out on little journeys toward other neighboring cities, we will always go together, and, helped the one by the other, no wave shall ever beat either of us quite down; but if the journey fail, and the city is not reached, we will

put back to the home port to repair damages," I cried gaily, "and then try again—but always together."

"And when we make the last journey," she said slowly, "that short journey to the Golden City, oh, John, if the kindly Captain would only take us both together!" and as I smoothed back her hair, my hand was wet with tears.

The sunlight fades into twilight; the twilight darkens into night; the night brightens into moonlight, and the slender spars of the yachts, as they sway softly to and fro in the gentle swell, are dim and shadowy. And as we sit and dream of the harbor's past, the masts grow taller. Main, topsail, t'gallant and royal yards stretch broad across. Great black hulls loom up beside the risen wharves, and, in wreaths of mist, the smoke of boiler fires sweeps eddying round the masts and shrouds; while, in the plash of the quiet waves against the pier, the distant voices of the long since dead echo over the little bay with the rattle of cordage and the clank of chains and the bustle and stir of a vanished life.

The moon goes down, and dreams waft our souls, and the sun rises upon this present world.

And now yachts real, not phantom ships. Great white sails, full-spread and full-bellied. White spray astern and white foam astern. Bright colors, bright eyes and rounded forms on deck. Umbrellas and parasols fixed—a tack—and unfixed with a duck. Many things to eat and more things to drink in the cabin. The glories of a race; the egotism of victory, and a sail homeward wing-and-wing.

That evening as Jemima and I sat on the vine-covered porch—I smoking—we were the unwitting, although, I regret to say, not unwilling hearers of a conversation, one-sided, so far as our ears were concerned, being conducted between Aunt Hepzibah and Aunt Eunice, Aunt Eunice's share being, of course, from her peculiar habit, inaudible at our distance.

"Why, I've told you that before."

Silence.

"Yes I have, often."

Silence.

"Oh, well, if you've forgotten, and it will pass away the time, for it is a stupid hole, I'll tell you again. You see Robert——"

Silence.

"No, he's eleven years younger than I am, not twelve. I'm fifty-nine and he's forty-eight."

Silence.

"Not four years, five years and six months, this month. We were married in January. Your memory is becoming very short, Eunice."

Silence.

"Well, I'm glad you remember at last. Well, the summer before, I had become very tired managing the farm——"

Silence.

"No, not barn, *farm*! (Heavens, how deaf she is!) I had become very tired managing the *farm* alone, and I wanted some one to look after things, under my direction of course."

Silence.

"No, of course he's not a farmer! You know he's a lawyer, now don't you?"

Silence.

"Of course you do. And every farm hand I had ever trusted always cheated me. You know I first met Robert that winter at the first Assembly."

Silence.

"Well, I believe it was at Mrs. Ensanguined's ball—but that was just before the Assembly. And Robert was lonely, and his practice wasn't very good, and so I thought it would be a good thing to marry him; and we were married in January, you remember, not February."

Silence.

"Yes, he's a good husband. Last summer I was afraid to send the cabbages to market by express, so I had him take them in in a bag when he went to the office, and that saved expressage too."

Silence.

"No, the house in town is closed now, and when we get back we'll go direct to the farm."

Silence.

"Yes, she'll deliver it all right. Sarah is a good girl, and she can superintend butter-making as well as I can, and I told her before I came away just what houses to deliver it at. When I get home I'll discharge Mary and take Sarah's place myself," etc., etc., etc.

Jemima and I nearly suffocated from suppressed laughter, for we didn't dare utter a sound, and at the last piece of information we quietly slunk off the porch and down the steps, and walked away down the village street in the moonlight.

"Poor Uncle Robert!" ejaculated she when we were out of hearing.

"And poor John," rejoined I; "both married out of hand!"

"John, how dare you! You know that you——"

"Just said 'Will?' and you kissed back a 'Yes' in no time."

"Well, your eyes said what your tongue didn't dare to say, you old coward, and I pitied you, and saved your harassed feelings."

And so, like two very young (though we weren't very young) and very foolish persons (though we didn't think we were), we walked and talked till bed-time.

"How strange," said I to Jemima, in the speculative time just before sleep, "that Aunt Hepzibah, a woman of comparative wealth, and who knows every one worth knowing in the City of Brotherly Love, should marry a man to help her take care of the cabbages on one of her outlying farms!" But Jemima answered not, for she was exploring the Land of Dreams.

The next morning our ship that had been built to stay, not to sail, unloaded us, and we departed; and the Professor and his bugs went with us.

For we had met, soon after our arrival, a great entomologist (or he thought he was, which answered every purpose) whose near-sighted though kindly blue eyes were fortified with excessively small, square spectacles of high magnifying power, reposing upon a nose which seemed endeavoring to escape from an exceedingly large, round and reddish beard, and who lived in an atmosphere of bugs—bugs little and bugs big; bugs harmful and bugs harmless; bugs pretty and bugs ugly—but always bugs. His very conversation swarmed with them. He talked with a buzz and a hum, as if he were himself a great bumble-bee. He had four enormous, solemn creatures picketed to him, so to speak, by gold chains attached to gold bands around their black bodies, whose entire lives seemed to be spent in testing a case of strength of leg *versus* strength of chain, with an utter disregard of what was intended to be, probably, the succulent pasturage of his black

clothes. In every pocket he kept, in glass bottles perforated with small holes for air, bugs of every color and combination of colors, putting each bottle in the pocket whose temperature accorded most closely to the native temperature of the incarcerated bugs. And his admiring friend was Aunt Eunice, who hitherto had shrieked at the very imagination of a bug. For when she and the Professor were first introduced, he had at once whipped out a bottle of bugs, and, before she could say nay, had given them a holiday on his hand, for purposes of explication. Whereat one more adventurous insect had incontinently tumbled off his playground and into Aunt Eunice's ear-trumpet, to her shrinking horror. And then it was that the Professor had triumphed, all unconsciously; for his extreme solicitude to recapture the erring one without unduly compressing its fleeing frame or twisting one of its multitudinous and strenuously active legs, so endeared him to the tender heart of Aunt Eunice, that she accepted the friend, notwithstanding his traveling entomological menagerie.

More hand-shaking; more station, "left" seashore, salt marsh, pine forest, villages, farms, towns, and again Boston.

And as we hurry with the crowd from the cars, a story told us the day before by the old skipper of the yacht, who had been a man-o'-war's-man, as he leaned over the tiller and kept the gaff-topsail warily in his eye, breaks, a wave of mirth, over my mind. Said he:

"When I was aboard the Bluewater down in the Mediterranean, we lay off Nice for a week or two, and lots o' them gimcrack fellers over there come aboard. We had a greeny just bein' broke in, and one day I set him to holy-stonin' the deck. He wasn't used to all that there furrin' toggery, and he'd bin readin' a powerful sight in the Errabyan Nights. Well, that day a right smart o' them fellers come aboard, they bein' some big-bugs from shore. The hatchway was open fur air, and they went nosin' 'round to see the ship. Pretty soon up steps greeny to the officer of the day, and salutin', says he, 'One o' them kings has fell down the hatchway!' and marched back solemn to his holy-stonin'."

And in the midst of the crowd I smile audibly; whereupon a huge Westerner, walking an inch or two nearer, remarks, "'Scuse *me*, stranger, but maybe you was laughin' at *me*?" I telegraph, "Not by *any* means!"

CHAPTER VII.

BOSTON.

JEMIMA and I, leaving our elders to a nap in the Hotel Vendôme, wander off to see the town ; and as all good people from elsewhere do, and as all good Bostonians do not, we, as in duty bound, ascend to the cupola of the State House, passing on the way the stands of battle flags, whose tattered folds and splintered staves are eloquent of fields lost and won ; of individual heroism and combined bravery ; of riven homes and shattered hearts ; of liberty, equality, but, alas, not of fraternity. But, dusty and decaying, they speak of the past, thank God, not of the present.

Through the hieroglyphicked panes of the cupola windows—silent witnesses to the glorious fact that the possessors of the scrawly names were possessors likewise of a proud vulgarity, of some money (hence diamonds) and of tenantless noddles—through these disfigured panes behold the view, from the hub of the Hub, of the Hub of the universe.

At first sight, a little town, a disappointingly little town. From this highest central point on which we stand, the cone of a sugar-loaf, the city proper covers the sugar-loaf hill, a confused mass of brick and stone and, seemingly, meaningless streets, that meander like the Meander from nothing to apparently nowhere, diving in and out of the brick and stone, and coming up every now and then unexpectedly to the beholder and apparently to themselves, for they immediately go down again. Nearly surrounding this sugar-loaf are the combined waters of the Charles River and harbor, bringing to it, on the harbor side, a bristling growth of masts, like a dead and exceedingly sparse forest. And indenting the loaf on the harbor side are long inlets by the wharves, as if the harbor waters, being sweet-toothed, had eaten their way in, or being ambitious and lovers of scenery, were trying to scramble their way up the hill, with the masonry, for the view.

Immediately in front of our directoried standpoint—that is, to the south—and a little to the west, lies the historic Common,

where the old boys played themselves into men, and then merrily (?—alas! the games at Bunker Hill and Valley Forge were not very merry—then we'll say cheerily) played the British out, with pleasant little iron balls and leaden balls, instead of leathern balls. And hence it is, perhaps, that the old town seems disappointingly small. For, from the days of the Puritan Fathers (of many of us), so many grand things, and noble things and heroic things—so much of thought and culture and true refinement have centred in and around this (comparatively) little town, that those of us who come from larger aggregations of brick and mortar, founding, perhaps, our ideas of its physical upon our knowledge of its mental greatness, expect to find more than the old town has to show.

Further away to the south stretch the flat lands of South Boston and the South Bay, and, sweeping around to the west, the brick-covered ridge of ostracized South Boston; the Park, reclaimed from the mud and mire and stagnant water of Back Bay, and, between it and us, New Swelldom, between New Beacon and New Boylston Streets, also reclaimed from the erst pestilent Back Bay (and, let us whisper it, from many another perhaps still pestilent Back Bay of unacknowledged beginnings and incomes).

To the west the Back Bay, where the little Charles River spreads out into apparent greatness and real shallowness, and across and beyond that the old Cambridge, where Washington marshaled his little force, where has been of long time and still is Harvard, the fountain of many a life-rill and river of thought and purpose and high endeavor and higher attainment, and from whence, from him not long since with us, a "song has gone out into all the world" for the drying of many a tear, for the righting of many a wrong, for the nerving of many an arm, and for the lifting of many a soul as high as and into heaven.

To the north, and across the Charles, now a narrow stream ere it enters into the harbor, lies Charlestown, with its world-famous monument (happy Bunker to have owned and named, if he did, that hill!) and the navy-yard.

Farther north the Mystic River, as it comes down into the Charles and the harbor, and toward the east, Chelsea and South Boston.

Away to the east the harbor and Governor's Island, where the old-time Governor lived in peaceful dignity apart from his shop-keeping colonial subjects, until a book-seller rode his Gubernatorial Majesty three thousand miles across the sea—"and he never came back any more." Still farther away islands and island groups, until we reach and pass those half-sunken rocks, so vividly called The Graves, and are out at sea.

And now, having a bowing acquaintance with Boston, we call upon her; and having a liking for Old Swelldom, we go down first through Beacon Street, noting the numerous chimney-pots, whose whirligig tin tops, denoting the way of the atmospheric wind, denote likewise, probably, the way of the domestic wind, especially when accompanied with gout or rheumatism. We note also the bow-front houses, as if plethoric with good living; or as if, curious as to the doings of the neighbors, they had their heads out of window to look up and down the street. In these live many of the old régime, still clinging, literally, to the side of their steep Beacon Hill, and loth to go down to the newer and more convenient and more unhealthy and level locality below.

We, however, not so loth, go down; and going down, reach the region where Money is king. Long rows of beautiful houses built, it is said, on piles over a whilom marsh and on a whilom dirt-and-ash-heap. Beautiful hotels—the Vendôme, chateau-like; the Brunswick, ugly, but "swell." Beautiful churches where no paupers need apply—Trinity, of irregular shape, with cloister walks, Lafarge windows, and purple and gold, and, doubtless in the surplice of the rector, fine-twined linen, and sinking, they say, on its unstable pile foundation, and yet the rostrum from whence has been given to the world a message of holiness and Christian manliness; the new Old South, as unlike the old Old South as new is unlike old, and, to some tastes, not quite as near heaven, but if a way there, a gorgeous way; the new Brattle Street Church (every thing new) with a porte-cochère, under which Debt drove his coach-and-four, until the Baptists came and drove the congregation away, but Debt remained. And so, looking and musing, we return by the broad Commonwealth Avenue, with its double row of trees, to the Public Gardens and the Common, which are again disappointing as to their size, but pretty as to their ornamentation. Walking up through these,

and past the beautiful soldiers' monument on an exceedingly arid and desolate looking little hill, we arrive once more at Beacon Street and the State House. Through Hancock Place (which is eight feet wide and as steep as a ladder) we go up to Temple Street and Beacon Hill Place and the less sunny, because the less wealthy side of the old régime, and so down by the old graveyard of the Park Street Church to the older King's Chapel; and here, opening the old oak door with its massive latch-lock with huge bronze rings for handles, we step into the past and into the Established Church of the Georges. Cherubs and suns and dragons start out in tarnished gilt from the carvings. In the grim and uncompromising pews sleepiness has ever, evidently, been unknown. The sounding-board has thrown many thousands of yards of drone at the ears if not into the minds of long-dead-and-gone hearers. On the walls several tablets vie with each other in perpetuating the mendacity or servility or pride of survivors. And one of these especially attracts our attention. It was erected to the memory of Samuel Vossel, by his great grandson, "of Jamaica," in 1766; and on it is related that the said Samuel, having been imprisoned by the Star Chamber Court, Parliament, in July, 1641, "voted him £10,455 2s 2d" (it was well to be exact) "for his Damages. But the rage of the Times and the Neglect of Proper Applications since, have left to his family only the honor of that Vote and Resolution." Poor family! Now if they had only had the money as well as the honor!

Through the upper floors of old Faneuil Hall—now degraded, as to the first floor, to railroad and other offices—we wander; and among portraits of Kings and Queens and Governors and other notabilities, we see a rude, colored engraving, "engraved, printed and sold by Paul Revere," of "The Bloody Massacre perpetrated in King Street, Boston, March 5, 1770, by a party of the Twenty-ninth Regiment," which, poor and rude as it was, kindled a fire which only died out in the ashes of a kingly rule.

We ride over to Cambridge in a prosaic horse-car, which ill accords with "The Bridge with the Wooden Piers," and take a hurried look at Harvard, deserted and still in the long vacation. Walking on toward Longfellow's house, we pass the Washington Elm; and, as it is being trimmed, I am fortunately enabled to secure sufficient of the historic wood to make a cane. Reaching

Longfellow's gate, we are confronted by the ancient Hibernian gardener, who is watering the shrubbery and grass, and who declines to admit us. But by a judicious use of the Blarney Stone, and the mention of the fact that my aunt is a descendant of Andrew Cragie, the original owner of the place, whose ancient elms tower over us as we argue, he is led to exclaim, "Be jabbers, ye've more roight to say the place than anny one that's bin here these twinty years!" and forthwith turns us over to the housekeeper. By this pleasant dame we are shown through the lower part of the house—Lady Washington's parlor, the meeting place of the little Republican Court; the dead poet's favorite view, through the length of the broad piazza greenly shaded by its ancient blinds, across the peaceful meadows to the low, hazy and distant hills bounding the calm horizon line; the "clock on the stairs;" the various treasured objects which were of interest to the owner and are now therefore to the world; and last of all the library, the birthplace of so many thoughts which went out therefrom to ennoble the race, and the home of the great creative spirit—"just as he left it," the old housekeeper said, with tears in her eyes. And we reverently shut to the door, as if shutting it upon the beloved dead.

The declining sun sees our party rattling over a street almost as badly paved as one in Philadelphia (which is saying a great deal), *en route* for the Portland wharf.

As we leave the carriages, I notice that Bolus actually helps Victorine with some of the satchels and wraps. What can have come over the spirit of their nightmare?

CHAPTER VIII.

TO PORTLAND; AND PORTLAND.

INDIA wharf—a wharf of old-time associations, when huge Indianmen lay alongside, their jutting bowsprits and jib-booms reaching over the water street and peering into the third-story windows, while the lofty masts bore their royal, sky-sail and moon-sail yards up toward the clouds. When beardless and ruddy-cheeked boys went aboard, bound for the far-off dazzling and golden East, and cried themselves to a tossing, ill-smelling, confined and altogether uncomfortable sleep, in the memory of the last sight of the maternal tears and handkerchief. When sallow, bearded and broken-down men came ashore with more or less (generally less) of the gold and none of the dazzle of the again far-off East, and cried themselves to sleep because no mother's happy tears were their first sight on reaching home. When rich stuffs lay upon the beams and planks, peeping out of ill-conceived bundles in wonderment and dismay at their new damp and chilly home. When silk-clad heathen walked down the gang-plank in an atmosphere of attar-of-roses and sandal-wood, carrying visions of the Arabian Nights and the Car of Juggernaut to gaping and round-eyed boys, and righteous anger and proselyting fervor to fiery and hard-hearted worshipers of the mild and lenient Christ. A wharf of evidently (now) old-time dirt and present decay, and odorous of everything else under the sun except attar-of-roses and sandal-wood; and alongside lies, in lieu of an Indiaman, the steamer *John Brooks*, bound likewise for the East—"down East"—Portland; and her smoke reaches over the water street, enters third-story windows and soars away quite up to the clouds.

What a crowd! What a be-bundled, be-packaged crowd! What a conspicuous absence of regulation traveling bags and slim umbrellas, and what a conspicuous presence of ephemeral paper imitations of the more durable leather, and of "ambrils" of

the ancient and bulgy type. "The wharf come to life and moving!" might he exclaim whose senses were limited to that of smell.

With Aunt Hepzibah in the van—an animated cow-catcher or snow-plough—our party struggles aboard and to the upper cabin, where the Professor is instantly pounced upon by an individual whose air of near-sighted investigation combined with general dishevelment of person proclaims him a brother scientist, and carried off in a whirlwind of gesticulation (resembling the usual attitude of the Professor's bugs' legs) to his (the friend's) stateroom. For the Professor had been invited by Uncle Robert, at Aunt Eunice's instigation and with Aunt Hepzibah's permission, to join our party, as we had discovered that his summer pathway lay in the general direction of ours, and as Aunt Eunice had furthermore discovered that he was an intelligent listener (he probably applied his habits of minute investigation of bugs to the reading of the moving hieroglyphics of her lips) and that he did not yell into her trumpet.

Leaving the remainder of the party in a general attitude of uncomfortable defiant expectation, I go below again to procure tickets and staterooms. Tickets forthcoming—also the ukase, "The last two staterooms—no more left." The appealed-to and quarter-enlivened steward opines that some staterooms engaged may not be ultimately taken; with which uncertain consolation I am fain to be content, bespeaking, however, in the event of highly-probable disappointment, the best berth below for myself the (again enlivened) steward can secure. So I mount to the cabin with my two keys and break the news gently; when Aunt Hepzibah instantly assigns the better of the two staterooms to herself and Uncle Robert, and the other to Aunt Eunice and Jemima, cheerfully remarking that I will probably find the berths below very comfortable; whereat Jemima glares at her like an aroused bantam, but I quiet her with a look, and the traps and assignees are installed in their respective localities. Bolus and Victorine go (together!) below to hunt up resting places, and we walk out on deck.

The hawsers thrown off, the last man aboard—why should there always be a last (and frantic) man to divide the passengers into two rival bodies, those who fear he will and those who fear

he won't fall in?—and waterside smells give place to salt-laden breezes, and we sail off toward the sea.

Far to the east, the dimming brightness of the day. Back to the west, the growing glory of the departing sun. Against crimson and gold; against deep-dyed clouds and tinted cloudy peaks; against flaming rays shot wide and high, the old spire-crowned city lay on her central hill and gazed out toward the sea, her thousand eyes bright with the fire within, or flashing back the sun's more brilliant flames. Lay and gazed till light reflected, paled, grew dim and disappeared; till light internal gleamed in points of orange fire; till bay and sea were but a misty void; till night came down and threw her sombre cloak upon the city, silent and at rest.

The scramble for food (politely called supper) over, Jemima, whose poor little head has been racked with an ache beaten into it by the heat and sight-seeing of the day, takes me into her state-room and hugs me a pitying good-night. I resign her to the care of gentle Aunt Eunice, and retire to the hurricane deck, and there, ere long almost alone, sit and gaze upon the beauties of sea and sky until, inspired by the scene, like Mr. Wegg "drop into poetry," scribbling upon a note-book leaf which the fast receding light speedily renders perceptible only to the sense of touch:

The dying sun dyes with his burning blood
The fleecy clouds that gather round his bed
And turn their ashen faces toward their lord,
Mute witnesses of his departing state.
Their misty forms he robes in burnished gold,
Or decks with molten silver's shining light.
Now o'er the waves floats out the crimson flood,
And tinges all the steamer's whitened side,
And flames aloft to paint with deepest flush——

Just then the notes of the most untuned piano that ever a tuneless-souled maker inflicted upon an auction-attending world, burst upon the cabin below, through the open transom and upon my ear. The flush fades immediately from my imagination, and I wrestle with the spirits of inharmony. The piano ceases—perhaps the player is dead—and once more the wonderful beauty of the scene thrills every nerve, fills every thought.

But now the death-pall settles slowly down
 Upon the sun, and all his shining gifts
 Dark, envious night strips from the pallid clouds,
 And spreads her blackening mantle o'er the sea.
 Gone is the sun; no more the tossing waves
 Uphold the pathway of his burning blood;
 But——

That infernal piano again! And thinking that, perhaps, my poetry is becoming a trifle lurid, I give it up and start to go below. On the way down the now dark deck to the companionway, I see a pair of shades, whose voices seem familiar, and stop to listen—if they should ever see this confession, I hope they will pardon the intrusion.

“Zat eet vas whyfore I proceed not to execrate the presence of Monsieur,” Victorine is saying.

“Oh, Miss——”

“Call me Ma’m’selle! Eet ees in my ears more *agréable* zan ze stupide Mees of ze *Anglais*.”

“Maddeymoysell,” continues Bolus, with a wave of his shadowy arm, “Hi’m gratified that so trifling a haction on my part changed your views, seeing as ’ow we must be naturally left much to heach other’s society.”

“Must, Monsieur Boloos?”

“Har, Maddeymoysell”—but one enlarged shadow is now visible, one side of it at an inclination—“Har! and Hi’m ’appy that we har. I won’t deny that it was a hinconvenience to disrobe myself in the dark, but your pleadings, Miss—Maddeymoysell—went to my ’art, and I felt that it was but the hact of a gentleman to hapologize for a laugh which was but the work of a hunguarded instant.”

“Oh, Monsieur Boloos”—in somewhat smothered tones—“ze *manière* of Monsieur—eet vas so *aimable*—so *majestique*—as one should tink like as Monseigneur ze king himself should prostrate. For zat *raison* I may not more to hate Monsieur. Ah, Monsieur Boloos, say aftaire me, *Je t’aime, ma chère!*”

“Jer tame, mar chair.”

“Oh, eet ees *excellente, splendide!* Say now——”

But as the mental atmosphere is evidently becoming somewhat summery, not to say moonlighty, I nobly fly, and go below

and into a motley and, as a rule, open-mouthed crowd, whose intellects are absorbed by the performance by a blind man upon the above-named piano.

I soon give that up likewise, and go still further below, and seek the heretofore-enlivened steward. To him again appealing, I discover that what was highly probable before has become highly certain now, and I have no stateroom. Still further going below, I ensconce myself in a berth above a colored brother, whose only baggage seems to be a duster, which must have been useless, for he carries also dust.

Ensconced as aforesaid, as comfortably as a man might be in a coffin too small for him, I endeavor to woo the drowsy god, but am interrupted in that silence-requiring occupation by an animated conversation between two berths.

"Go on deck and have it out," suggest I.

"Who are you talking to?" interrogate they.

"You!" forcibly reply I.

"Shut up, you d——d old wind bag," politely request they. Whereupon, putting the cap to their own mouths, they do as they request—and the drowsy god is wooed and won.

The steamer and we and the sun all reach Portland together; but while the steamer weeps little dewy drops from deck and paddle-box at our departure, we nobly refrain, and march through the silent business streets up toward the Preble House. Cent. per cent. is locked up and not yet awake. Cent. per cent., when he does awake, will sit down on piles of hides; get into shoes; crawl under hats; even insinuate his bony self into bonier molds, wherein are destined to be ill-molded soft and rounded women-forms, all in the endeavor to out-per cent. other per cents. in the same fields.

"Oh," sigh Aunt Eunice's lips, as we seat ourselves disconsolately in the deserted and hardly-awake parlor of the Preble House, "do you think we shall have breakfast soon?"

As the look accompanying the sigh is directed at Uncle Robert, he immediately and with simulated cheerfulness opines that we shall have it soon, when Aunt Hepzibah sharply interjects, "If you will look over your head, Robert, you'll see that we shan't!"

Uncle Robert, so adjured, looks meekly over his shoulder, and solemnly reads aloud, "Breakfast at seven. Dinner at——"

"Robert, that will do!" interposes his wife. "Thank goodness we don't stay to dinner. Eunice, we shan't get a bite till seven, so you'd better make yourself comfortable;" and suiting the action to the word, she reclines upon a sofa in as uncomfortable an attitude as possible, and affects to sleep, which proceeding does not tend to render us more lively.

The Professor, who has been absorbedly studying a fly on the window-pane during the above little colloquy, here walks out of the door, and is shortly to be seen from the window, standing on tiptoe by a tree, endeavoring to reach a huge tree-bug that is crawling up the trunk. So I propose to Jemima (who is as bright as a lark again) that we speer around the town till breakfast time; and we accordingly depart to speer.

Near the Preble House—Commodore Preble's old mansion, "transmogrified" so that the old Commodore would not know his own should he come to it—is the first brick house ever built in Portland, built then one-and-a-half story by Longfellow's grandfather and added to the extent of another story and a half by Longfellow's father, from whence the son went to other scenes and immortality.

Further down the street—Congress Street—some man with ecclesiastical proclivities has built himself a story-and-a-half church of granite, wherein to ecclesiastically dwell.

State Street, the best and most beautiful, opens up, with its fine residences, and double row of elms on the north side and single row on the south side, the trees having been so planted, perhaps, to mark the degrees of social distinction.

Oak Street, lined on both sides with English elms, and probably so called because the city fathers meant them to be oaks.

"Boarding and Baiting Stable" swinging at the horseless traveler from an ancient sign.

The observatory, utilized by Uncle Sam from an ancient windmill, from which all Portland lies spread out like a map. To the east the rocky harbor, with its islands, little and big, dotting the blue of the sea. To the north and south the city, lying on a narrow ridge, embosomed in its elms. And in the

little room where we stand, maps and charts, thermometers and barometers, spy-glasses and telescopes, and all the paraphernalia of a semi-lookout, semi-signal service station.

Breakfast; the Portland and Ogdensburg depot; the 8.25 train for Fabyan's—and the Forest City melts into the forests and seas where no cities are.

CHAPTER IX.

FABYAN'S.

LEAVING Portland, our iron way winds first through farm-lands of sterile soil and scanty crops; through farm-lands where soil gives place to rock and rock to forest; past hills whose tops are ever further from the level and man and ever nearer the clouds and God, till Mount Kearsarge lifts its barren crest into the distant view; Pleasant Mountain and Wood Mountain loom up, and Mount Washington, the king of all, appears, cloud-capped, majestic, and our goal.

The best side for the view on the P. & O. Railroad is the left, as far up as Conway, and the right from there to Fabyan's. At Upper Bartlett's observation cars are put on, and the wily and informed traveler who gets his traps all ready for a rush, and rushes, gets a good seat therein, and can look calmly and with satisfaction upon the innocent and uninformed who do not.

Passing Hart's Ledge and Sawyer's Rock, the railway winds along the Saco River, amid ever-increasing wildness and desolation, where "the land seems all on edge," as a Westerner from the prairies remarks, till the great valley which terminates in Crawford's Notch appears, and we plunge into the very heart of the mountains. The old Crawford House at Bemis Station, deserted, gray, weather-beaten, and staring from its sashless windows like some ancient skull, flies by; the Giants' Stairs ascend from woody depths where torrents war to barren heights where clouds rest; Mounts Franklin and Monroe fall behind us and disappear; we pass by the old Willey Mountain House, now far below us in the valley, and see the long, tree-swept lane down which, in days gone by, from far above us, it slowly slid with the earth on which it stood, upright and uninjured, to its present resting-place; and the Notch, with its V-shaped patch of clear blue sky, appears far ahead.

The valley becomes narrower and seemingly, from the nearing sides of the vast mountains, deeper. The sunlight suddenly goes out, and a furious dash of rain from a passing cloud brings curtains down and wraps up, till the sunlight comes in again. The storm-cloud creeps down the mountain side; lingers a moment to still further vex the torrents; creeps slowly up the opposite wooded heights; covers, in a clinging embrace, the mountain top, and sails darkly and grandly away, leaving little wisps of vapor, like stragglers after an army's march, to follow as best they may. The Notch comes nearer; is just before us; is here upon us; and beside an old and deserted road-way we dash through its rocky portal, and emerge from savagery to loveliness, from desolation to cultivation, from a wilderness to a little smiling valley high up among these mountain tops, where the meadows lie yellow-green underneath the sun; where a little lake sparkles and dimples in the bright light; where the window-panes of the new Crawford House flash us a welcome, and where we stop at a depot and civilization. A little further run on a down grade, and we arrive—at 12.35 P. M.—at Fabyan's, which is simply a house, a huge house, set down in a meadow by a railway station, without the ghost of an attendant village.

Dinner in a huge dining-room, where the tables seem like white-coated soldiers on review, with shining castor-helmets and white plate-buttons and knife-and-fork medals of honor; where the waiters male, having been used to pitching hay, serve the edibles in like manner, and where the waiters female, being American, and having to sustain the National dignity, glare at would-be eaters, and move around as if their corsets were instruments of torture and the dining-room the Hall of the Inquisition. But the food they reluctantly serve is good.

It is pleasant to see how Aunt Eunice has entirely conquered her prejudice against bugs. The Professor sits at her side (somehow he is always found in that locality) and having unpicketed his four captives, transfers their pasture-ground to the table-cloth, where he re-pickets them, and then he and Aunt Eunice incite them to graze upon bread-crumbs, much to the interest of guests and waiters. Another thing the Professor has learned, which is to talk into Aunt Eunice's trumpet in such a confidential tone that we cannot understand. And to judge from her countenance, the

tone or the conversation or the speaker or all three, are enjoyable. During the first part of our acquaintance with him, he had taken at every meal all his bottles of bugs from his various pockets and ranged them in a semicircle around his plate, studying their actions during the progress of the meal, and commenting thereupon, which comment sometimes verged upon hortation. But we gently, though unanimously, protested, when we had neared the candor line of acquaintance, intimating that while unbottled bugs might be endured, or perhaps in the far-distant future even enjoyed, during gustatory occupation, bottled bugs could not be—that we drew the line at the Picketed: and he gracefully yielded.

There is a quartette near us, in whom Jemima and I take as much interest as they in the captives, that interest lying solely in speculation as to which is the wife of the man, and as to whether she, whichever she is, waxes the end of his beard—which reaches far down his chest, terminating in a horn with an exceedingly sharp point—or whether he does it himself. As to one, her hat curves up and her nose curves up and her upper lip curves up and her lower lip curves down and her chin curves down, and she is all curves (but not lines of beauty), except her body, which is all angles (but not right angles). The second looks as if she were suspended from an invisible hook in the ceiling by an invisible cord attached to the knot on the top of her head, so tightly is her hair drawn up on all sides, while the nostrils of the third quiver, when she smiles, like the lips of a snarling dog, so that she gives one the pleasing impression that she is about to bite. We have just pitched upon her of the curves and angles as the wife of him of the defensive beard, her meed of attention being the smallest, when the cord suddenly pulls the Suspended up out of her chair with a jerk, and eight glance-darts, tipped with a scorn that should shrivel, are hurled at our unconscious entomologically-interested pair, and with the remark that people had better feed their *children* instead of BUGS, they stalk majestically away. Uncle Robert roars, Jemima and I try not to snicker, and Aunt Hepzibah is maliciously pleased (for she hardly approves of the Professor's attentions), and she at once repeats with emphasis. Aunt Eunice colors and is indignant, while the Professor is fairly drowned in scarlet, emerging with a sheepishness of expression that argues the detected swain.

Dinner over, Jemima and I wander over to the "tourists' parlor" at the station, where tourists are supposed to rest and gather information from the agent or parlor-keeper, whose sole business and interest in life seems to be to give information—of a seemingly pleasing and sometimes blush-calling character—to the pretty clerkess, whose sole occupation would appear to be to bear him company and receive said information. Jemima instantly scents a romance; whereupon, as we stroll away over the surrounding fields, I tell her that she is right—that her acumen and penetration are seldom at fault—that there is indeed a romance in real life. That separated by Cruel Fate (disguised as her mother), they had flown to these inhospitable wilds—"But they live at the hotel," says Jemima. "True," I reply, "but still the wilds are inhospitable. They therefore flew to these inhospitable wilds, where, in the company of Nature and of each other—" "But don't tourists go there sometimes?" again interposes my wife. "Again true," I rejoin, "but that is a mere accident. Where, in each other's company, they are at this moment planning an escape—" "But why did the railway company build that pretty parlor-house; and aren't they paid?" "Ah, my dear, that was one of the noblest, most philanthropic acts that ever a railway company—noted for its acts of disinterested charity, as all railway companies are—ever performed. To bring two yearning hearts into communion—to join two severed lives, this railway company, as a means thereto, built that—" "Now, John, you're joking!" "Solemnly, my pet, I'm—" but she throws a handful of daisies in my face, and runs away. In a few steps I am again by her side, and find her busily engaged in telling her fortune from a rapidly dismembered flower.

"One, I love,
Two, I love,
Three, I love, I say;
Four, I love with all my heart,
Five, I cast away.
Six, he loves,
Seven, she loves,
Eight, they both love;
Nine, he comes,
Ten, he tarries,

Eleven, he courts,
Twelve, he marries.
One, I love,
Two, I love,
Three, I love, I say ;
Four, *I love with all my heart*,
Five, I cast——
No I *don't !*”

The last petal stands untouched. It and its now barren stalk are flung aside, and the hands that have plucked it are clasped behind my neck. “Cast you away, my darling—cast away my life, my soul, my all? Never! Hateful flower, to tell me that I shall cast my love away!”

And two young (and foolish?) persons, who have only given their very lives to each other, having but little else to give, live over again, amid the bright-eyed daisies, who nod their heads approvingly, the story of their love, a story not yet old and worn; while the shadows from the solemn mountains creep to and over them, and the sun goes down, to smile upon a western world that, with her hovering clouds, shall blush at his approach.

CHAPTER X.

MOUNT WASHINGTON; A STORY, AND A LEGEND.

As we stood on the platform waiting for the train for the Summit House, Uncle Robert treated us to a sensation. A long, straight piece of track stretches past the station, and a light freight train was observed approaching. Without informing us of his intention, he strolled down the track toward the train, and stood in the centre, calmly awaiting its approach. It came thundering on, but he did not move. The whistle sounded sharply, but still he stood his ground. Aunt Hepzibah screamed, Victorine followed suit, and Bolus tore toward him. But just as it seemed as if he must be run over, he stepped quietly aside and the train passed by, the engineer leaning out of his cab window and gesticulating curses on his adventurous head. To describe the scene which followed, would be but to trace the passage of the wifely mind from keenest anxiety to keenest wrath. If Uncle Robert's life had been in danger then, it was doubly so now; but he bore the tongue-lashing with smiling equanimity, merely remarking that he wanted a variety, and had had it. And he had; for, for once in his married life, he had risen from the position of cipher to that of unit. As he afterwards remarked to me, he had always had a curiosity to see how a rapidly moving train looked coming on dead ahead, and he said it simply grew—didn't appear to move, but only grew larger and larger—and that the fascination was much like that which a bird probably experiences in the presence of a snake approaching to devour it—it was difficult to move from its path. Uncle Robert rose considerably in my estimation, notwithstanding his foolhardiness.

But now all are put aboard and puff away, while I start off afoot at 2.05 for the same goal, my route being the carriage road to the Base Station and the railroad thence to the top, there being no other foot-way from Fabyan's.

A pretty road, winding in and out of the sparse timber and along the brawling Mount Washington River; past one or two

deserted houses, a deserted saw-mill, and a deserted Half-Way House; past innumerable butterflies, that flutter and inconsequentially dart around like double gold coins, and are as quickly gone; through a toll-gate (at the beginning) where \$1 toll is charged the now infrequent carriage (no wonder they built the railway extension from the Base Station to Fabyan's); gently ascending, with two or three crossings of the Mount Washington River, and at 3.52 (I like to be exact) I am at the Base Station, which is six and a half miles from and 150 feet above Fabyan's, which is 1,571 feet above the sea, the Base Station being also the junction of the branch of the main line from Fabyan's and the Mount Washington R. R. proper. A few steps on, the round house. Near the round house a tavern. In the tavern a glass of beer (thermometer 90° in the shade, and water very bad, total abstinence advocates). The round house left at 4.17 (again exact) and the real climb begun.

And a climb it is. Imagine walking three miles up a slippery pair of open stairs, often twenty or thirty feet above the rocks, and you have it. For the railway is built on trestles, from a foot to thirty feet above the ground. The only pathway is the ties, and they are slippery from oil in places and everywhere else from the polishing of rain and snow and some few feet, and incline their surfaces, of course, at the angle of the elevation of the road, which is often from twenty to forty degrees; consequently, as one's foot will not hold at that angle, one is obliged to tread upon the upper edge of the tie, with the rocks and earth apparently racing away underneath.

The forest towers on either hand, and the stillness is broken only by the tiny denizens of rock and wood, whose voices sound drowsy in the heat. The forests trees dwindle to shrubs; the shrubs disappear in grass; the grass dies in rock and barren earth, and the glory of the view lies below. Below, Fabyan's and the Base Station, with the narrow line of the track creeping sinuously, with hidings and appearings, up the vast slope. Beyond, little valleys with peaceful meadows and shining water; forests, here greenly black, fading into dim and misty blue; jagged peaks; tree-covered summits; a chaos of mountain and hill, of valley and plain, of rock, earth, water and wood, and the dreamy summer haze softly veils the distant hills, and makes the horizon that of fairy-land; while the grandeur of the scene, the awful

stillness of the mighty mountain, man's puny strength and yet all-conquering will, fill the soul with reverence and awe, and with a strange and almost fierce delight.

I am nearing the top and the cloud; for the top has worn its cloudy veil all day, only two or three times relenting and beaming down upon me. Therefore as I hear a puffing far below, and an engine with its train of two cars appears, like some determined monster, literally gripping its way up the steep, I tarry for its coming, jump aboard as it passes by, and am puffed and jerked and laboriously lifted, through cloud and chilly air, to the Summit House.

A hotel (now literally) in the clouds, and 6,292 feet above the sea; a long, low, white structure, anchored by large chains to the rocks, and in front of it a long platform, which is also the railway station.

A bath and supper, and we sit by the huge fire and read the *Among the Clouds*, a newspaper published up here; buy photographs; write letters on illuminated sheets of note-paper with dried Mount Washington flowers stuck through them; look out, and wish the rain and mist were a clear sky; yawn, and wonder what we can do to while away the winter-seeming evening.

Uncle Robert feebly proposes cards, which proposition is met with chilly silence. The Professor coughs, and complains of his throat (Jemima told me he had shouted to Aunt Eunice the whole way up), and Jemima says if some one only had a story to read aloud how jolly it would be, sitting around the light from the open fire. We all say we wish we had, but we haven't; when a stout individual, who has been sitting in abstracted fashion, with each outstretched arm supported by the thumb on each knee, suddenly wakes up, and says that if mademoiselle (Jemima colors) will pardon him, he has a story in his trunk which may interest her, and which it will give him pleasure to read aloud for our (he evidently means her) benefit. We shower him with thanks, from which he escapes, dripping as it were, and presently returns with a magazine, when we insist upon installing him in the most comfortable chair in the great, square hall; and, drawing closer around the fire, we sink into attitudes comfortable for listening.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he begins, "this story was brought to my mind by the place where we are, and is called

THE DENT DU MIDI.

PROLOGUE.

I.

The little billiard room of the *Café* echoed with the clicking of the balls, as they flew frantically, and for the most part meaninglessly, around the solitary table, also little, standing in the centre of the room, and made dents in the ancient and flabby cushions, which barely sent them off again on their wandering excursions. The green cloth of the table was specked with chalk, and all around the edges the battered cushions were black and shiny with the grease of generations of leaning hands. On the deal table, in the corner, stood a smoking cup of *café noir*, with its attendant decanter of *eau de vie*, while another cup sent forth its steam from the top of the huge, round, brass-banded porcelain stove. Two persons were dabbing away at the contemptible little balls, and causing, with all the cracking, but a slight and long-intervalled movement of the curious counters, like the "Ins" and "Outs" of an office directory, nailed against the wall. One of them, pending a slowly calculated shot upon the part of his comrade, looked yawningly at the prints of Swiss heroes, and French generals with moustaches ending in needle-like points standing out at exact right angles with their pointed beards, till his gaze wandered through the open window to the towering peaks on the opposite side of the valley, and rested almost unconsciously on the nearest and most sublime, lifting its pointed top, a ragged mass of spire-like rocks, touched here and there with gleaming bits of snow, up into the western sky. For a moment he gazed vacantly; but soon a gleam shot into the dark grey eyes, a gleam of purpose and endeavor, and he turned suddenly to his companion.

"Miro, have you been up the Dent du Midi?"

Mirolas Kupsc lifted his black and almond-shaped eyes from the now scarcely moving balls, whose futile dashes he had been watching with a pensively mournful air, and looked inquiringly around.

"Ees eet zat I haf mounted zee Dent du Midi, vat you say?"

"Just that."

"Non, I haf not mounted him."

"Well, what do you say to trying it? You know it won't take over two days, and the view from the top is superb, almost all Switzerland lying spread out like a map before you, and—" But here the patience of Mirosklas gave out, and he poured forth a torrent of French to prove that English could be spoken faster than any language extant, and that of all persons whose native tongue was that horrible speech, no one ever talked as fast as his very good friend, Frank Forester—for to poor Mirosklas perfect English was a something to be attained in the dim and distant future, and only after much trial and vexation of spirit.

The wordy torrent ceasing, slower speech spread its gentle current over the two, and consequent intelligence, instead of dazed vacuity, shone from both pairs of eyes. With cues now thumping the resounding floor to enforce arguments, and now serving as leaning-posts during patient waiting for the end of some disapproved speech, they strode the room and talked, until the upshot of it all was reached when Frank said, "Then we start to-morrow afternoon at three?"

"*C'est bien*," said the other, pulling the long bell-rope, an embroidered and fly-specked piece of heavy cloth that hung near the door.

The blue-eyed and short-skirted maiden appearing, payment for billiards and coffee, some ridiculously small sum, was chinked into her extended palm, and with a *bon jour* the two friends betook themselves down the steep stone staircase, past the peasant-haunted *café*, and disappeared in the old Hotel des Bains, whose galleried and elm-shaded front faced the room from which they had come.

II.

The afternoon sun shone brightly over the beautiful valley of the Rhone; here lighting up the meadows to a deep, resplendent green, darkened by the patches of shade cast by the dotting apple trees; there gleaming whitely on the long lines of road winding in and out among fields and trees, and stretching themselves towards distant Aigle, Monthey, and St. Maurice; and still further on, sparkling and glinting on the turbid waters of the Rhone, as they rushed on their way toward their first resting place, the Lake.

And underneath the glorious sky and smiling sun, leaving behind them quaint old Bex, nestling at the foot of the vine-clad and chestnut-crowned Montex, behold the two upon their way, equipped for mountain work with alpenstock and hob-nailed shoes, and flask wherein lies, clear and limpid, the distilled nectar of the Swiss cherries. A goodly pair they are, although their national peculiarities stand out prominently, forming a marked contrast. The American, tall and meager, like most of his race, strides over the white road with a long swinging step, which stirs the waves of his brown hair, and betrays muscle and life throughout his frame, and brings a transient color to his cheeks, paled from childhood by the nervous air of his native land. The other, shorter and stouter, looks almost the Tartar, with swarthy skin and raven hair, and mayhap some Tartar blood does flow through his Russian veins. But although thus unlike, they are bound together by one of those warm travelers' friendships which oftentimes make of chance acquaintances lifelong friends.

The Massonger bridge echoed under their passing footsteps ; but before they had crossed its wooden length, they glanced up the sunny valley, and the beauty of the picture spread before them stopped them on their way, and they leaned on the parapet, and gazed upon its quiet grace.

A little beyond them the mountains sent out rocky spurs from east and west, which, filling up the narrow valley, advanced in broken terraces toward the Rhone, and walled its banks with precipices. From side to side over the water, grey with the *débris* from its parent glacier, sprang a fairy arch, one perfect curve beneath, growing so light and fragile toward its centre, that scarcely did it seem able to bear the weight of the laden peasant, bending under the burden of his *hotte*, who crept slowly along the road that crossed it. And further yet in the distant south gleamed and glistened in the bright sun a snow-clad peak, whose dazzling top was almost lost in the glow of the sky, so white and pure and ethereal it rose ; while underneath the springing arch were caught glimpses of a fair, still valley, dotted with little towns and glittering church spires, filling up with their bright beauty the stone-framed picture. And on the hither side of this same picture, and facing this wondrous bridge, rose an ancient *château*, clinging to the rocky sides of the rising mountain, and bearing on its

curious, rounded, peaked turrets, strange weather-cocks, perched high on their supporting poles, and veering in the changeful breeze; while all around the ancient building were fortified ascents, and fort-like walls, pierced by long, narrow loop-holes, which also dotted its rising towers. And on the further side of the stream, the sun shone whitely on the precipitous rocks, and shimmered on the patches of moving water revealed here and there by the river's winding banks, while high up across the blue, black, speck-like crows winged their slow way, seeming almost to touch the light and fleecy clouds which sailed along their path, and sending down ghostly caws before they vanished into the thick gloom of the forest-clad mountain side.

"Looking at pictures won't get us to Champéry, Miro," said Frank, "and if we want to see its lights to-night, we had better move on."

"*C'est bien vrai*," responded Miroslas; and forthwith their march was resumed.

Their footsteps clattered over the stones of Massonger's streets, as they passed through the little hamlet, and then fell with a softer beat as they struck out again into the road.

Past Chouex's height, crowned with its old church and scattered houses, they tramped; through Monthey's quaint streets, where they paused a moment to drive away the afternoon's heat with huge drafts of beer, and soon they were zig-zagging up the slopes of the Val d'Illiez, toward Champéry. Up, up, always up; now by the white and gradual ascent of the post-road; now by the steeper grade of an old bridle-path, cobblestoned and slippery; past vineyards, bristling with their short, stake-supported vines; now plunging into little clumps of hemlocks, where the sunlight came through the feathery branches in glints and shafts of white light, and brightened their dark shadows in patches; now past some dirty and picturesque *châlet*, with its combination, under one roof, of habitation, hay-loft, and cow-yard; and as the sun sank behind the mountains in front of them and left their path in shadow, they came out upon the long and gradual incline of the road which, high up the valley's side, leads to Champéry. Following this a little way, and half rounding a projecting spur of the mountain, they were brought face to face with another of those pictures which the greatest of all artists, Nature, paints in ever varying colors.

Far below them lay the valley from which they had come, half in shade and half in sunshine, cleft by the silver line of the Rhone, while from below their feet they caught the faint murmur of the Val d'Illiez's torrent, as it brawled on its way toward the larger stream. On the hither side of the valley Monthey lay, a dim white cluster in the surrounding green, encircled by its grey vineyards; and, at the foot of the opposite slope, Bex sparkled and burned from a hundred sunlit windows and star-like weather-cocks, while the vast shadows of the western mountains crept slowly eastward across the fields. Now the silvery light of the Rhone goes out, and the river is but a dim grey line; the last weather-cock flashes in a gleam of gold, and the reddening light mounts high and higher up the rugged mountain side. The black green of the hemlocks is tinged with its glare, and jutting points of rock gleam from their masses, like bright jewels in some dark setting, while higher up, the Alpine pastures catch the glow, and lie in yellow slopes toward the west. When suddenly the long line of fantastic peaks stretched against the pale blue of the eastern sky, a mass of grey and ragged rock, flushes a bright and rosy red, which, deepening in its hue, sets every projecting cliff and slender spire ablaze with crimson light, until the mountain tops seem beacon fires—signals of the approach of night. Redder and redder they burn; deeper and deeper they blush beneath the ardent gaze of the setting sun; until the shadow spreads its pall over their topmost heights, and they stand in ever darkening grey, part of the sleeping world. Long wreaths of mist begin to twine their shadowy forms around their feet; the gloom of the valley deepens into night, and from the blackening blue the evening star gleams whitely above the horizon, forerunner of the host which soon shall stud the sky.

And underneath that sparkling host, beaming down like loving faces of those not lost but gone before, the travelers tramp over the darkened road; and as they walk, the Russian hears, murmured by his side, as if the speaker were in some far off, by-gone scene:

Like the mountain my life, like the sun her smile,
In its absence, I, lone and drear,
Wait and watch, watch and wait through the long dark night,
'Til at morn it again appear.

Champéry's lights gleamed in the distance—points of orange flame from the deep black of the hillside. Into its little cluster of hotels and *châlets* they strode, and the glowing square of the door of the Hôtel de la Croix Federale swallowed them up.

"Let's go into the *salon*, Miro, and see who's here," said Frank, as, refreshed by water without and wine and dinner within, they came with slippered feet out of the *salle à manger*. So into the *salon* they went, and saw therein that heterogeneous assemblage which is only possible in a Swiss hotel "in the season." Frenchmen—a few—dark and moustached and effervescent with word and gesture; Englishmen—ye gods, how many!—whose clothes fairly broke out in plaids, whose aw-ing speech was everywhere loudly audible, and whose "women folks" were dressed with an ingenuity in ugliness impossible to be surpassed, and which seems to be the normal condition of the traveling Englishwoman. A sprinkling of other nationalities, German, Russian, Swiss, American, etc., and among them all one small group, which instantly arrested Frank's attention by a certain something which characterized the women who composed a part of it, and which made him almost sure that they were his countrywomen. He was about to point out this circumstance to Kupsc, when one of the ladies turned so that her features became visible. In an instant Frank's face turned to marble, and he clutched the shoulder of his friend for support, while he stared at her as at one risen from the dead. For a moment he stood thus, while Miro gazed in wonder, and then suddenly turned and left the room with the manner of a man utterly dazed.

THE BEGINNING.

I.

The scene changes; and tracing the footprints of Time, we follow backward his path through a year and more, and, upborne by all-powerful imagination, speed through the fogs and storms and over the waves of the Atlantic, and staying our course on the sandy shores of Cape Cod, become witnesses of the beginning of the little drama whose ending may be for the weal or for the woe of the actors in it.

"Miss Lee—Mr. Forester," and Mr. Forester finds himself standing beside a little figure in black, around whose neck and

wrists the daintiest of white something—airy and gossamer-like—is wreathed, showing by its purity the creaminess of the skin it touches, and looking down into a pair of deep blue eyes, in whose depths the lights and shades come and go, as over some quiet lake. A few words of introductory talk—in which, however, the weather has no share—and Frank says, “Will you not take my arm, Miss Lee, and come out on the piazza, where I am sure you will find it much cooler?”—for her fan was beating the air in quick strokes, trying to extract some coolness from its heated breath, and apparently with but indifferent success.

So they made their way through the crowded parlor, filled with the bustle of arrivals and departures, and the buzz of talk—as if some great bee had settled down in the room, and his misty wings were filling all its length and breadth with their hum—and passing through an open window, found themselves under the soft, starlit beauty of a summer night. Far away to the south stretched the great plain of water, blacker than the sky above them, and moaning in its restless sleep, while all along the shore at their feet the waves came rolling in, in long lines of white light—glowing with the fire of the sea—and breaking on the sandy beach, scattered glittering, star-like embers over the wet sand, to lie there fading, until the next rush of water bore them away and left others in their place. Behind them the great hotel blazed from its hundreds of windows, and resounded with the music of its band and the patter of dancing feet; and further yet, the pine woods stretched away, until they and the horizon were blended in one.

“Many thanks, Mr. Forester,” she said, “for bringing me out into this cool quiet. I don’t know whether it is to your taste or not, but to me the murmur of the sea, and the song it sings, are better than the music of any band, play they never so well.”

To which Frank replied, as in duty bound—and, to his praise be it said, he meant it—that he heartily agreed with her, and would be only too glad to pass every evening in that way.

So they sat and talked, while the audacious breeze played with the dark beauty of her hair, and kissed her cheeks, and smoothed her white forehead with gentlest touch, until the dimming of the lights behind them recalled them to the lateness of the

hour, and they left the sea to moan out its sorrows to the stars and the sand and the distant woods.

And to the walls of their respective rooms were uttered these sentiments :

"He's rather handsome—a trifle conceited though, but not enough to hurt him—and says he is fond of sailing. He asked whether I was. I suppose that means he is going to take me out. I hope mamma will like him, and, well—that he won't go away to-morrow."

"Stunning girl, that; talks like a book. Blue eyes, dark hair, cheeks just enough color in them, nose a trifle—not pug, but piquant, you know. Flirts, I'll be bound. Hope she'll stay. By Jove, I'm in luck!"

The next day Frank was introduced to Mrs. Lee, and found her an amiable, middle-aged lady, inclined to stoutness and novels and little be-ribboned caps and naps and quiet in general, and ready to leave her daughter to her own devices. All this pleased him immensely, and he spent the entire day in cultivating her good graces and in discovering her likes and dislikes, one of which last, he found, was the sea.

The following morning, with a fine assumption of interest, he went up to her and said :

"The day promises to be so fine, that I have come to ask if you won't do me the favor to go out for a sail, and perhaps Miss Lee will go too"—turning to Florence—"if she is not afraid of the water."

"You are very kind," replied the mamma, "and I'm sure I should be delighted to go, if it were not for the fact that I'm *always* sea-sick. As for Florence——"

"You know I'm never sea-sick, mamma."

"If you *cannot* go, Mrs. Lee, and if you will allow Miss Lee to go without you, I will promise to take very good care of her," said Frank.

"Well, I don't know," began Mrs. Lee; when Florence put in a "But, mamma," and Frank prudently retired to gaze absorbedly at a fly on the window-pane, until such time as victory should perch upon the younger's banners—which he felt sure would be the case. And his confidence was not without foundation, for, saying, "I will be down in a moment, Mr. Forester," Florence ran

up stairs, and soon appeared in a boating costume which was ravishing to behold, and had, as it were, the breath of the waves in its folds. When they reached the boat, she observed that it was prepared for but *two* people, but she did not remark upon her discovery.

Thus was the way paved for many another sail. Sometimes they two went off alone on that most interesting of all expeditions, "crabbing;" wherein eyes become tired of watching the water, and naturally seek other and doubtless more interesting, because more animating, objects. Wherein the lazy leaning over the side of the drifting boat is provocative of much day-dreaming and consequent conversation, which, at any pause or embarrassing point, is easily quickened or changed by the alarm of crabs, be it imaginary or real. Wherein care must be taken that delicate fingers are not nipped in the wildly waving claws of their crabships, and wherein lunges after these be-legged gentlemen are the cause of some screaming and much clinging to the sides of the boat—or anything else that presents itself.

Sometimes they went, in company with a skipper who had endeared himself to them both by his deafness and much looking after his sails, to distant Nantucket, and, after plunging wildly into the ice-cream dissipations of the island, came home by the light of a harvest moon, which beamed over them so tenderly, and paved with gold, for their delighted eyes, a tossing pathway toward the sunrising.

Or, tiring for the nonce of these pleasures of the sea, they took long drives through the dim and dusky pines, when the quiet shades of twilight fell over all the land, tempting out sweet and tender thoughts and words by the magic of its hush, which, like some fair flowers, shrink back abashed before the glare and glitter of the noonday sun. And these were drives to live in memory: for the narrow road, carpeted with the fallen needles of the pines, wound in and out among the shadows, and every now and then came unexpectedly upon open glades bright with the moonlight's yellow glow and fringed with the fantastic outlines of the sombre trees, which made the blackness further on seem deeper and more dense.

So the days flew by, until the night was but a gap, to be bridged over with ill-concealed impatience, between the pleasures

gone and those to come. Until the mere touch of her hand, the passing brush of her dress, the sound of her voice, sent a thrill through all Frank's frame, which was to be explained in but one way. Until bright firesides, and cosy little homes, and various trips ranging over the known world, in all of which but two figures were the actors and possessors, so beset his waking and sleeping hours, that, unless he were by her side, he was as one daft, and the wonder and ridicule of all his friends.

And she—did she have no dreams, did no fair pictures dance before her eyes and brighten their deep blue and make their glances soft and lustrous, even though they shot through the sparkling mist of tears—happy tears? Far be it from this historian to drag before the public eye the phases of a maiden's heart! Let that heart lie beneath the snowy bosom unmolested, and with it all its hopes and fears, save those that look forth from the windows of the eyes. They said—those who watched her—that her eyes, during these days, wore a dreamy, far-away look, as of one who gazes into a distant future, in which many things, as yet unknown, loom distantly, like land yet indistinct along the horizon's level line, which may bear within its hazy blue all possibilities of field and flower and sunny plain and deep, dark woods, through which flow silent rivers, and high mountains jagged with frowning precipices and noisy with many a torrent. And her face, said they, grew daily more content, more soft, more womanly, until the radiance of its smile was dazzling to the lookers-on, and its changing lights and shadows—bright lights, soft shadows—reminded them of some fair landscape lying beneath the loving beams of a summer sun, and shaded, not obscured, by the light and fleecy clouds—breath of some calm lake, lying like a quiet thought between its shaded banks—which sail above it in the sky and throw their flying shadows on the sward.

II.

It was a witching night. During the entire day that was past, Frank had been on the sharpest and most annoying of tenter-hooks, looking with an anxious, angry eye at every cloud that threatened rain, and rendering the life of the livery-stable keeper a burden to him, by his frequent visitations to, and inspections of,

the pony-phaeton which he had engaged for the evening. For this evening, he had determined, should resolve probabilities into certainties. (Do you deem him presumptuous in thinking them probabilities, fair reader? Should he have thought of them only as the remotest possibilities? Should not a man look before he leaps?)

The day drew to a close. Supper came somehow to an end—it is to be regretted that Frank didn't eat much, although it was probably natural—and the phaeton appeared, drawn by an animal who was wise in his day and generation, and knew how to take care of himself. The hotel disappeared behind the pines; the scattered houses of the little village kept it company, and no voices sounded near them but the whispers of the pines, as they and the breeze talked together in the deepening twilight. The stars came out one by one as they drove along; winked knowingly at them, as if well used to such company, and seemed to laugh at their vain efforts at conversation.

For truly were their efforts vain. At last Florence hit upon some subject—the latest arrival it was—and talked it into such threadbare shape, that even Frank must have seen the pretense, if his own brain had not been in such a whirl. “How very calm she is,” he said to himself, “and how interestedly she talks of those detestable Smiths, as if she really cared anything at all about them. I wish she would stop and give a fellow a chance.”

But had he known at what a mad rate that little heart was beating beneath the calm exterior of its owner, he would have plucked up instant courage, and have thought kindly of the Smiths—if he thought of them at all.

But so it was that, disheartened by her apparent calmness, he let the way slip by in idle chatter—how idle and hollow and utterly unnatural it seemed to them both—until their journey's goal was reached, and they must retrace their way. The pine woods left them, and they suddenly emerged from their gloom into the broad, full light of the risen moon, on the shore of the sea. It was their goal, and yet was not their goal. The goal of both their hopes was as yet unreachd, the gate to which could be unlocked by such a little key, by three small words, but which, although so small, he did not seem to have the power to utter.

They looked out on the scene spread before them, and then, by an impulse which neither could resist, into each other's eyes.

What need of words? The moon who looked down upon them, sole spectator of their bliss, saw only a fair head, crowned with its glorious tresses, resting against a heart that beat tumultuously beneath its touch, as if that pillow were the one on which it had been nightly laid since infancy. Saw only a pair of full, red lips—but of what a mold!—that ever and anon were shut out from its light by other intervening lips, which by their pressure sent the blood more hotly to her cheeks and deepened the love that looked out from her eyes.

And what a scene they beheld, as they gazed over the heaving plain. Before them lay the sea, scintillating from each wave-top points of light, which gleamed for an instant above the changing hollows of greyish black, and then disappeared, only to flash out again in brighter colors. Far across the water, from the shore at their feet to the dim horizon, stretched a path of golden moonbeams, broadening and brightening as it neared its source, until all the horizon beneath the moon glowed with the fervor of its rays. From a distant point—a shadowy outline against the pale sky—a lighthouse shone faintly in the brighter moonlight, while all the curve of the shore from its glimmering star was broken into patches of light and shade, as the black pines ran out in promontories over the white beach.

“Frank,” she said, as she lay gazing out over the scene, while the moonlight fell over the delicate outlines of her face and lit it up into greater beauty, “if we could step back into the old days of fable, would you go with me to that far-away dreamy land to which that pathway leads across the sea, where the moonlight is ever as it is to-night, and where life is one long blissful dream, never ending, with no thought of all the cares that infest the real world around us?”

“Would I?” he replied, “Would I not? Could you go anywhere where I would not follow? But don’t you think that, after all, this real world is the best, giving us the opportunity, as it does, to rejoice with each other, to sorrow with each other, to suffer for and with each other? Are two lives ever so closely joined together, whose joint life has been all sunshine, as those where clouds—but not of their own forming—have sometimes obscured their sky, and driven them to the shelter of their mutual love? Are not the heat and the hammer-strokes necessary to weld the iron?”

Was the way home like the way thither? Did not the glow of a great joy light up every thought and word, and make it all too short?

III.

"Florence," said Frank, a few days afterwards, as they sat on the beach, "I wish you wouldn't have so much to do with that Mr. Smith."

She looked up in wonder, and with her eyes inquired what he meant.

"Well, you know," he said, looking away from her, and prodding holes in the sand with his cane, and carefully filling them up again, "he isn't just the kind of man I like to have you with, he——"

"I can't abide a jealous man," she remarked in a general way, as if the sea and sky were her only listeners.

"I'm not jealous," he began; when she turned around to him with an astonished look and said, "Did I say you were? Did I suppose you were? It would be too absurdly ridiculous! When a person is supposed to be jealous, he is also supposed to have some cause, and what cause have you, Mr. Forester?"

"I don't say I have any cause," he answered, his face darkening, for that "Mr. Forester" wounded him; "and not having any, I am not jealous, but yet I only wished to warn you, for——"

"What have you against Mr. Smith?" she interrupted, "I'm sure I think him very nice."

"Why, nothing that I can tell you, exactly. He makes an ass of himself though, parting his hair in the middle so; and I am always reminded, when I look at him, of the coroner who said he didn't want any fee for sitting on the body of such a man—the operation was sufficient recompense in itself."

"If that is all you have to say against him, Mr. Forester, I will leave you to collect some better reasons for your premature assumption of marital authority;" and with that she rose, and calmly walked away from him and disappeared in the hotel, leaving him sitting in moody and injured silence, altogether forgetting to fill up the holes which spotted the sand around him with their cavities.

Why did the waves, which but a little while ago had seemed to laugh through all their sun-lit foam, now moan and sob as they broke on the beach at his feet? Why did the bright light, which had danced in silver over the broad sea, now shine with a hard glare that pierced his brain and made him shade his eyes from the metallic rays? What invisible cloud had settled down over all the sea and land and sky, and turned all things grey and cold to his vision? Only that of a lovers' quarrel, you will say, and a very pitiful one at that. Truly it was a pitiful one; but is the bee's sting less painful because the bee is small? Are not the sharpest, most poignant griefs often those which spring from pettiest causes? "Verily how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

And now it was all over, this bright dream which had lit up his existence with such a golden glow through the weeks gone by, and made life expand into one long happiness—a shining pathway from the spot where this sun first rose upon his dazzled eyes, to the portals of eternity, glorified by two bright figures passing through its gates of pearl, hand in hand.

But could he blame himself alone as the cause of all this disaster? Most bitterly did he curse his stupidity and utter want of tact; but still the thought of the truly feminine injustice with which his warning had been received, a warning given only from the depths of his love for her—for he knew, as she could not, that Mr. Smith was no fit companion for her, and was pained to see that she was pleased with his attentions, although he did not for a moment believe that her love for him was estranged thereby—combined with his pride, and strangled the impulse to follow her and regain, at any cost, the favor he had lost. So he sat there absorbed in moody thought, stabbing the sand around him, and scattering its particles in grey, misty jets, until the sun sank into the distant west in a blaze of angry red, and the great bell of the hotel clanged out the supper-hour. And all through the evening he wandered alone over the star-lit beach, thinking of the little hand that only twenty-four hours ago—and it seemed as many years—had lain upon his arm, and with its pressure sent a thrill through all his frame.

And she was, to that good lady her mother, a source of wonder and of no little annoyance that evening; for she clung closely to her side in the hotel parlor, and yet was so *distracte*,

that her answers to the occasional questions of the buzzing crowd shot often absurdly wide of the mark, and occasioned many a covert smile and whispered inquiry as to the whereabouts of Mr. Forester.

IV.

The next morning Frank was tossing in an odorous fishing boat on the great watery plain, greyly lit by the coming day, and thinking but little of the fish which sometimes attached themselves, through no skill of his, to his hook. And when the fisherman with whom he was, had caught, for a wonder, all that his soul desired, they put back to land, riding over the silvery red of the waves as the sun mounted higher and higher on his daily journey, only to find that Florence and her mother had just gone on a day's excursion, and among the company was Mr. Smith (whose soul was tried within him at the extraordinary iciness of Miss Lee), and that the chance for an explanation, for which he was now eager, had gone with them.

While he was endeavoring, after his breakfast, to draw consolation from his cigar, and signally failing in the attempt, a telegram was put into his hand, which caused him to spring to his feet with an exclamation of dismay, and inquire the time of the next train. It told him of the rapidly approaching death of his mother from the effects of a sun-stroke, and begged him to come instantly, if he would see her alive. Never had his portmanteau been packed in such a hurry; and soon he was being whirled toward the station.

And now that he had leisure to think, his thoughts reverted to Florence, and the probable effect upon her of his sudden and unexplained departure. But it should not be unexplained, for he would pencil a note telling her of his trouble, and imploring her to wait till he could come back and put everything right between them. He did so, and in it asked her to send him a note, if only a line, to tell him that she would accede to his request. Arrived at the station, he gave the note to the driver, with strict injunctions as to its delivery; the whistle shrieked, and he sped away toward the great city.

"Be jabbers," said Bryan, as half way back to the hotel he thrust his hand into his pocket to make sure of the letter, and saw

the distended fingers appear below the rim of his coat, "be jabbers, if that pocket ain't like me purrus, it'll niver howld nothin' at all at all! Faix, what'll his swateheart say—for it's his swateheart I'm thinkin' she is. But it's herself won't know nothin' about it, if ye don't be afther tellin' her, Bryan, and ye're not such a fool as that, be me sowl! An' it's another she'll be gettin' t'morra annyway, an' wan more or less 'll make no difference;" and comforting himself with this conclusion, Mr. O'Leary rode home in the best of spirits.

v.

A still, darkened room; a thin, white hand which lay motionless and unknowing in his; a last fluttering sigh—the breath from the spirit's wings, as it took its flight to eternal rest; a cold, dead form that lay so still and white amid the hushed footsteps which paused a moment, that loving, tear-stained eyes might take a last look at the features over which the sod would soon grow green, while all the air was heavy with the odor of the snowy flowers, as if, when Heaven's gates opened wide for the new-come denizen of its bowers, some happy wind had caught the perfume of its smiling fields, and wafted it there to cheer those left behind; a new-made grave within the City of the Dead, from whose storied hills the great Bay lay spread out wide and calm, fit image of that blissful sea around whose Heavenly shores the ransomed walk; a lifeless home from which the loving spirit had forever fled, leaving behind, in many a piece of handiwork, sad memories of when she smiled upon him, and brightened all his life with her great mother-love—these were the scenes which greeted Frank upon his arrival at a home which he had so lately left, full of life and of anticipated enjoyment.

And with this new-found sorrow mingled the bitterness of that which he had carried with him from the distant sea, and blackened the sunshine of his days as, a few weeks before, he would have thought impossible. And now his first thought was to retrace his steps, and try to regain the love without which life looked one long and dreary blank, only to be endured until kindly death should end its pain. So one grey, misty day found him at the hotel door, eagerly inquiring whether Mrs. and Miss Lee were still there.

"They left day before yesterday, Mr. Forester," replied the suave clerk. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thank you, except to give me a room for the night," said Frank. "Did they say where they were going?"

"No, sir," answered the clerk, "they left quite suddenly, and probably forgot to leave directions as to where their letters should be sent. However, none have come for them."

Frank left his valise in his room, and then wandered down to the too well remembered spot, where this great sorrow had come upon him. And as he sat with his head bowed on his hands and called up, for the thousandth time, the scene there enacted, the sea, as if to comfort him in his great grief, sent its grey mist to enfold him in its soft arms and shut out from him all the hard, cold world, and sang for him a low, sweet lullaby to soothe his aching heart to rest.

Ah, if he had only known how another heart had ached in this same spot; how another head had been bowed on two little hands, and how the scalding tears had forced their way through the slender fingers and dropped upon the sand at his feet. But he did not. And although the sea moaned that it could not tell him, and sent its waves in long and pointed fingers up the beach, until they touched a tiny foot-mark still imprinted on the sand, and so tried to point it out to him, yet he could not understand, but carried with him from the place the woe he found there.

THE END.

I.

"May I never see her again as long as I live!" Frank had said to Miro, when, after telling him the story, his friend had urged him to seek a reconciliation. "Any woman who can deliberately throw away a man's honest love for such a trivial cause as that, and leave him no opportunity for explanation, is utterly unworthy of such a love. No, no, old fellow, let the past lie in its grave, and do not urge me to resurrect it. It sleeps soundly, and would only awake to shadow our lives with more misery and heart-ache. So we'll be off bright and early to-morrow morning for the top of the Dent, and lose old memories in the light from the glacier snows."

But although Miro said nothing more, he thought from the story told by Frank's face in the *salon*, that those memories could not be so easily banished.

So, in that utter stillness of the day's first hours, before even the first faint streaks of the dawn have come to dimly light the eastern sky; when the myriad insect voices which have rendered the past night vocal are hushed, and all nature is buried in its deepest sleep, and the stars still glow in flashing points of fire from the black sky, they made their stumbling way up the Val d'Illiez, their footsteps echoing weirdly from the dead, dark houses as they passed through Champéry's little town, and crunching over the loose stones as they left the height on which it stands and descended toward the bottom of the valley; crossed the noisy torrent on the slippery bridge of spruce poles, and commenced the long zig-zag ascent on the other side.

And as they mounted higher and higher, and at last, far above the tree line, which in its dark masses of spruce and pine and hemlock clothed the valley at their feet and made it seem some vast and yawning chasm, turned towards the *châlets* of Bonavaux, the east began to brighten across the valley of the Rhone, and the mountain peaks to show their black and ragged outlines against the paling sky, and the coming day shone, but dimly yet, on the light clouds which sailed above their summits. And as the faint grey light whitened their fleecy masses, and then dyed them slowly in ever deepening crimson, the sun flashed out from over the mountains, and all the peaks behind them brightly smiled their morning greeting, while the valley beneath, further from the heavenly light, still lay in shadow and darkness, brooded over by the mists of the night.

Up, up, past the *châlets*, from whose doorless doors the cows looked sleepily at them, their bells already beginning the music which would, throughout the livelong day, tinkle over those upland pastures; higher and higher, until their path led along the edge of a vast ravine which, in its precipitous depth, lay black and yawning at their feet; and following this, they were suddenly greeted by a blast of icy wind, the breath from a gleaming glacier which lay in silent majesty in a mighty cleft in the mountain's summit far above their heads. Scrambling over the slippery rocks, they came to the foot of a precipice, up which they dragged themselves by projecting stony points and tufts of grass and bushes growing in the crevices, and stood at length upon the summit of a *col*, or pass, and looked down into an enormous basin,

almost circular in its form, rimmed by the blue and white of encircling glaciers. Into this they plunged; and crossing an ice-cold stream which, fed by the melting snows that everywhere towered above them, dashed across their path, they re-commenced the ascent, zig-zagging up over rocks polished here and splintered and crushed into fragments there by the weight of the ice and snow which had ground down over them in centuries past. Up and up, until a great valley or cleft stretched away before them toward the east, its southern and therefore shaded side a mass of ice and snow, which lined its sinuous length with glistening white, save where some precipice of blue-green ice showed its cold face, or a rocky needle shot up into the air, while the northern slope frowned in vast precipices of jagged rock, or showed the steep and smooth inclines of the treacherous *pierres roulantes*; and all over the narrow bottom were strewn huge rocks in wild confusion, their surfaces cut smooth and polished by the vanished glaciers.

"Miro," said Frank, pointing to one of these, "if your angularities were as polished down as that rock's, you would be one of the most perfect gentlemen in existence."

"And one of ze—vat you call him—most stoniest? Ah, *mon Dieu*, if ze leetle tings vat make to angry one, could slip zemselves off of one as zey do of zat rock, it would be a grand gaiety. It does feel nossing, it does hold nossing, it does care for nossing. Is it not vell, zat?"

"So well," answered Frank, "that I would be content to stay here beside it, if I could do the same;" which speech, and the tone in which it was uttered, gave fresh evidence to Miro of the truth of his surmises as to those memories which were to be so easily lost up here among the glacier snows. But quickly recovering himself, Frank called out to the guide, "*Maurice! Maurice Caillet! Est il longtemps avant que nous ne mangeons? J'ai une faim de—*what is a bear in French?*—d'ours!*"

So, shortly thereafter, behold them encamped upon a rock, at whose foot there bubbled up a spring of purest icy water, issuing from the slowly melting snow which surrounded them on three sides with its dazzling purity. What marvelous quantities of good things that bearskin knapsack of Caillet's did contain! And after they had washed down all that it was feasible to "surround," with

drafts of good red wine, cooled in snow, they once more girded up their loins, and prepared for the final ascent.

Their way now lay up a long slope of the *pierres roulantes*, where at every step they sank into the fine, loose stones which gave way under their tread and went rattling down into the valley; and, after they had reached its top, along the edge of the *arête*, or ridge, which stretched up in a broken slope to the foot of the *dent* itself—descending steeply in precipitous terraces, on the one side, to the valley from which they had just come, and on the other falling, a sheer precipice, three thousand feet to the valley below. And as they climbed on, the way became ever more difficult, and the steel points of their alpenstocks found firmer and more careful lodgment to support their steps. Around the face of precipices they crept, their bodies clinging to the towering wall which rose above their heads as they edged along the scanty foothold of projecting rocks, while ever and anon some dislodged stone would fall from their pathway and, with a faintly heard crash, shiver on the rocks far below: waded across banks of snow that lay like huge monsters on the sloping mountain side, where a slip on the white surface would have shot the luckless one down the steep incline, to fly out into space over some lower precipice, and lie at its foot a shapeless mangled mass, and at last reached the foot of the *dent*, parched with thirst, and with veins throbbing from the intense heat, which, even upon the snow, beat down upon them. And as they looked around for water to quench their thirst, they espied a tiny rill which flowed almost in drops from the rocks at their side. Never was water more welcome; and filling their flasks, they started for the goal of all their labors—the glorious peak which reared its ragged points more than a thousand feet above their heads.

With renewed strength and heightened courage they pressed on. Over those terrible rolling stones; over rocks whose smooth surfaces presented but meagerest foothold, and where they climbed with hands and knees and toes; by the edge of precipices in whose giddy depths huge boulders seemed but pebbles; till at last, with panting breath and trembling knees, they stood upon the topmost crag—a narrow, broken pinnacle, which hardly served to hold the three—and, eleven thousand feet above the ebb and flow of tide, drank in the pure cold air which circled round that

awful height, and gazed upon a scene which, in all its plenitude of light and shade; of richest coloring of earth and sky; of gleaming peaks and far-off misty plains; of deep blue lakes and paler azure dome, will live, as long as memory holds its sway, to dim the eye with yearning for its matchless majesty.

Raising its enormous bulk against the southern sky, Mont Blanc, the king of European mountains, shone from its crown of everlasting snow, sublime. Like some great cloud it stood, lifting its head far above all other peaks, fit emblem, in its spotless purity, of Him whose handiwork it was. And all around it needle points of ragged rock pierced the blue heavens, springing, black and savage, from the white fields of snow that clothed their feet. In the far east the Matterhorn raised high its pointed shaft, seeming the spire to Nature's vast cathedral whose lesser pinnacles rose around it, and in its slender beauty reigning queen consort with its snow-crowned king. Near it the Monte Rosa glistened in its raiment of snow, which the setting sun dyes in deepest crimson, while away to the north an array of white peaks piled their huge masses against the sky in wild confusion, as if the earth had burst into great waves, foam crested. Among them towered the Jungfrau and the Mönch, and all the chain which looks down on the lakes of Thun, which, sweeping onward toward the west, ends in the Diablerets, grim with their saw-like teeth, and many a rocky peak shadowing Leman's storied waves, whose blue and misty length stretched to Geneva's towers. And further to the south the long hazy line of the Dauphiné showed against the horizon, melting away in the distance into the pale blue of the sky.

Such was the distant view; but what a world lay at their very feet. Far below them, seeming so near as almost to be reached by the outstretched hand, and yet dwarfed to Lilliputian size, lay the silver-threaded valley of the Rhone, studded with vine-encircled villages, and bordered by the deep green of the chestnuts and spruces, over which towered the rocks of the Dent de Morcles and its chain. And right below them, so that a stone dropped soundless from their perch through seven thousand feet of air down to its hither side, the Val d'Illeiez wound up toward Champéry; while, on the other side from where they stood, lay the valley-cleft of Suzanfe through which they had come,

separating them from the Tour Salière, whose icy sides rose to almost their own altitude.

"It's too grand for words!" Frank said; and indeed few words had been spoken by any of them, save now and then an irrepressible exclamation of wonder or delight; for their stay was of necessity short, and every faculty was concentrated in the one of sight. For the cold wind was piercing them through and through, and Caillet was urging their departure. So they corked their names in a bottle for the benefit of future climbers, and commenced the descent.

Their route down the *dent* lay along the same path by which they had ascended; but when they reached its foot, and prepared to descend to the valley of Suzanfe, the guide proposed to descend by an incline of the *pierres roulantes*, which swept down and out into the bed of the valley, broken by no precipices, but exceedingly steep. This, he said, would be much shorter and easier and, with caution, no more dangerous than the way by which they had come. So they started with long strides, plunging deeply at every step into the loose, gravel-like stones, and with alpenstocks trailing behind them, acting as brakes to check their speed.

Faster and faster they went, urged on by an ever-growing excitement, till the strides became leaps, and the stones rushed down with them, a rattling stream. Frank was ahead, and, not knowing the danger he incurred, kept on, until, looking back, he saw his companions far up the mountain side, gesticulating wildly to him, and pointing to firmer ground toward which they were making their way. He slackened his pace and, endeavoring to comprehend their gestures, looked around him. *He was in the midst of an avalanche!* All around him the finely broken stones were rushing downward, gathering volume and velocity as they rolled, until the entire mass was gradually loosened from its hold, and commenced to descend. Escape was a thing of the past, and to attempt it now would be to only waste the strength he still possessed. Seeing this he did not move, but, steadying himself with his alpenstock, awaited his dreadful ride. Swifter and swifter moved the stones—louder and louder became their roar, till his ears were stunned by the din, and his brain whirled, as, a mere speck on the surface of the mighty stream, he was hurled down towards the valley, the dust rolling up in clouds like the smoke of battle.

II.

"*Est ce qu'il est mort ?*" asked Miro, as, breathless and exhausted, he bent with Caillet over Frank's apparently inanimate form, which they had found far out in the valley, partly covered by the *débris* of the avalanche.

"*Non,*" answered Caillet, "*son cœur bat encore !*"

So they lifted him as gently as they could, and bore him to the spring by which they had eaten their dinner, which was near ; and after long and patient effort, by the aid of its cold water and the brandy in their flasks, he opened his eyes and gazed around him in a dazed, uncertain way, as if just roused from a heavy sleep. But when he tried to move, both his right arm and leg lay limp and helpless, and he sank back with a groan.

"*Courage, courage mon ami,*" cried Miro, almost in tears at the sight of his friend's misery, "ze neck it ees not broked, and ze arm and ze leg ve sall mend in not any time;" and with that he hastily took off his shirt, and tearing it into strips, bandaged the injured limbs, with Caillet's assistance, as well as he could.

Oh, that awful journey back again ! Down, down, down, the way seeming endless, and the poor helpless fellow whom they bore, racked with excruciating pain, and yet striving in such manly fashion to repress the groans that would come from his white lips, and trying, in a way that was pitiable to see, to help himself as they struggled with him over ice and snow and rocks, and made their slow way toward distant Champéry. But "it's a long lane that has no turning ;" and at last, when the stars had again shown their burning points in the black sky, and the night wind moaned fitfully through the valley, they once more entered the glowing doorway of the Croix Fédérale—but oh, how differently!—and met, as they entered it, a little black-robed figure, whose neck and wrists were encircled by some snow-white gauze, and whose deep blue eyes gazed into theirs in frightened questioning, and then into the face of the now senseless figure borne between them. One glance was sufficient ; her own face blanched to the whiteness of his she looked upon, and she staggered against the wall. But recovering herself almost instantly, she made the usual inquiries as to the accident, and then slipped out of the crowd which was gathering fast around the injured man and his exhausted bearers.

III.

What touch was that, so soft and delicate, which roused Frank from his stupor as it passed gently over his forehead? Only that of a woman's hand—only that of the young American lady, whose mamma, as the landlady volubly explained to every one, had known Monsieur in his own country, and who, as her mamma was so feeble, had offered her assistance, and was like an angel sent from the good God; for had she not given her a crucifix brought all the way from Rome, and was not her pocket always full of candies for the little son Jean, and did she ever grumble at the price of the wine? No, no! Mad'moiselle was a blessed saint, and she loved her as her own daughter.

And did that touch ever fail to rouse him? Often would he pretend to be still asleep—for never was she, by any chance, at his side when she thought he was awake—and through his half-closed eyes would watch her, as she flitted noiselessly around the room putting everything in order, or sat working at some airy nothing, or started up at every movement from his bed, to come to his side and softly draw the covering over him, and bathe his heated forehead, and smooth back his hair, only to glide swiftly out whenever he opened his eyes. And once—will he ever forget it?—as he lay and watched her thus, she stood and gazed at him, her eyes growing softer and softer as she looked, until, while a deep blush spread over her cheeks, and dyed even her forehead and snowy neck with its crimson flood, she came close to him and, stooping over, imprinted one fairy kiss on his forehead as he lay, and then turned and fled like a startled deer.

One day she came softly in and, thinking him asleep, moved around the room as was her wont, leaving order where she found chaos, until, reaching his bedside, she gently arranged his bandaged arm and was about to leave him, when he caught her hand and looking straight into her eyes said, "Floy, won't you stay?"

As on that bygone night when looks were more than speech, so now they looked into each other's eyes and saw there all they longed for, saw there what they had feared never again to see, the deep strong flame of love, which had smouldered beneath the ashes of the days that were gone—had only smouldered, not gone

out—and now burned clear and pure as when first kindled by the far off shore of the sea.

And when, a little afterwards, she knelt at the side of his bed, and held his thin, pale face in both her hands, and kissed his lips and forehead with her sweet red lips, so perfect in their form, so bewildering in their touch, she said: "Oh, darling, to think that we should both have wandered all this dreary time so far away from each other, each thinking the other false, and all the while each was loving the other so well! And now that we have found each other, do you think, my own love, that we shall ever be parted so again?"

What he answered need not be told; but she laid her head upon his breast, as if it had been her pillow ever since the night when the moon looked down upon them from over the golden sea.

And in the heaven of their love the days flew by on rapid wings until, so far was he advanced upon the road to health, they left Champéry's little town; rode down its straggling street; passed out between its clusters of ancient *châlets*, where the Indian corn hung in long, yellow rows from the queer balconies; descended by the windings of the smooth white road far above the torrent which brawled, almost unheard, down the valley; passed through Monthey's quaint old town, and crossing the grey and rushing Rhone by Massonger's wooden bridge, came back once more to lovely Bex, and the sheltering arms of the old Hotel des Bains.

And one calm and sunny day, when the summit of the Dent and all the chains of mountains which hem in the smiling valley were covered with the early autumn snow, and a broad belt of frost-dyed leaves ran round their sides, bright with crimson and orange and gold, while the valley still lay in summer verdure beneath the sun, the bell from the old stone tower rang out a joyous peal, and the voice of the minister echoed through the dusky aisles, "Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

The reader lays down his book and looks into the fire, and there is a moment's silence; and Jemima's hand steals over to mine, its soft pressure being returned, and with interest. At last

a kindly-looking and middle-aged lady (several people had gradually joined the circle during the reading) says, "Do you not think that the reason given for their quarrel is altogether too slight a one? People who love each other don't quarrel on such grounds. She should have seen that what he said was for her own good."

"Perhaps she did," replies a very pretty and rather coquettish girl—for the question had been addressed to the company in general—"perhaps she did; but perhaps also her conscience convicted her of some flirtation with Mr. Smith, and therefore she resented the correction the more keenly."

Every one smiles, and a light, as if from something newly learned, breaks over the face of a young man sitting near her, and he leans over and speaks to her in an undertone, at which she colors indignantly and draws her chair slightly from him.

"But they were happily married at last," says a thin lady in curls, evidently a spinster, with a just audible sigh.

"Yes, they were married happily at last," replies the reader—the magazine is on the table, and his thumbs are again on his knees—"and a married life is the happiest for either man or woman." But while he says it, the shadow of a sadness seems to creep over his face, and I notice that he is dressed in black.

"Granted," breaks in impetuously a voice from the dark outside of the circle, "provided you know whom you are marrying before you marry, but if you don't, then it is hell!"

We all start and turn toward the speaker. He is a tall, thin man, whose long, black hair shades a pale, worn face, from which his eyes gleam with a smouldering fire.

"Yes, it is hell," he continues. "You will pardon me for using the word—perhaps I should have said *sheol*—" and a half-smile breaks fitfully over his face—"but there is no middle place in married life—it is either heaven or hell. One heaven may not be as bright as another, and one hell may not be as full of anguish as another—that depends upon our several temperaments—but still it is either heaven or hell."

A confused murmur sweeps over the little audience, partly of approbation and partly of disapprobation, but the speaker goes on.

"How many marry an ideal, only to awake to find that which seemed gold and precious stones nothing but dross and paste—or worse. Let me repeat to you a legend—you will pardon me that

it is in verse—to exemplify and perhaps vivify what I have said.
It is the legend of

THE BRIDE OF THE DEAD.

“ Who is thy guest, Sir Roger,
An’ I may make so bold ? ”

“ My guest ? his name
Is Airthishame—
Sir Airthishame of Mold.

“ He rode up in the gloaming
With a missive from Lord Key,
Which did commend
His dearest friend
To mine hospitality.”

“ Why dresseth he in sable ?
Faith, it doth grewsome seem !
All others wear
Brave colors rare—
His eyes how strange they gleam ! ”

“ It is his color, saith he,
The color of his house.
He danceth well
With Isabel,
And pleased is she—the mouse !

“ For women, sir—most women—
Court e’er the latest guests :
More apt are they
Than earlier prey
T’ obey their small behests.

“ His eyes gleam strangely, said ye ?
It is with love, ye mean ;
Of Bel’s fair fame
Sir Airthishame
Hath heard ere now, I ween.”

What power of fascination
Had those strange eyes o'er Bel?
 She felt their power,
 And every hour
She asked, but could not tell.

The days flew by swift wingéd—
Bright morn and sun-dyed eve—
 And eve and morn
 Saw love new born,
That round Bel's heart did weave

Bright fancies, glowing visions,
Around that heart so strange:
 But who can tell
 What fancies dwell
Within a heart's wide range?

'Twas in the mystic gloaming,
When the fields in shadows lie,
 The word was said—
 But nameless dread,
As if a wind swept by

And blew its breath so icy
Upon her shrinking heart,
 Filled heart and brain—
 Yet they, now twain,
Should one be, ne'er to part.

'Twas this he whispered to her
As her head lay on his breast,
 And love's first kiss
 Unlocked her bliss—
Her bliss, her love confessed.

All dread the winds of passion
Cleared from her heart's bright sky;
 " Oh, Airthishame,
 My life, my fame
Are thine, both now and aye ! "

* * * *

'Tis near the hour of midnight—
For he this boon had plead—
 The bridal train
 Sweep on a main
With slow and solemn tread.

Their footsteps echo weirdly
Through the dim cathedral aisles,
 And shadows dread
 That lurk o'erhead
Chase even sunniest smiles.

They twain before the altar
Kneel, and the robed priest
 Of them makes one,
 Whom God alone
Can part. The words have ceased,

When from the tower above them
The bells toll forth the hour:—
 And midnight reigns,
 When spirits' chains
Are loosed by the Nether Power.

The sounds have come and faded,
When other sounds, and dread,
 Clang, roll and boom
 From many a tomb
In the crypts beneath their tread.

All start in wild amazement;
But turned to stone they stand;
 For over all
 A spell doth fall,
That binds each tongue and hand.

And lo! beneath the altar
A hidden stairway yawns,
 And pouring out
 In hideous rout
Come troops of skeletons.

They cluster round the bridegroom
And stretch forth bony hands,
 And hail their lord,
 Their mighty lord,
The leader of their bands.

And as all gaze upon him,
The firm flesh fades away,
 And, naught but bone,
 He stands alone,
And leers upon his prey.

Within his arms he clasps her,
Amid her shrieks and cries,
 And down that stair,
 Whence hell's lights glare,
He bears her from their eyes.

And as, near mad, they listen—
But none may move or cry—
 Her prayers and moans
 Are drowned in tones
Of awful revelry.

And thus the hours creep onward
With doubly weighted wings,
 Till chanticleer,
 That bird of cheer,
His matins loudly sings.

And as his clear *Laus Deo*
Soars to the brightening sky,
 From near and far
 Clang bolt and bar,
Amid a dreadful cry.

The door beneath the altar
Swings to with thundrous boom,
 And all is still—
 The silence chill
And deadly of the tomb.

But 'tis for but an instant,
For loosened is the spell
Which voice and hands
Had bound with bands
Forged in the fires of hell.

And moans and lamentations
Ring through the ancient pile,
And back are flung
In many a tongue
From nave and vaulted aisle.

“Thy keys, oh sexton, quickly,
T' unlock this curséd door!”
With shaking hands
The sexton stands
And draws each bolt and bar.

They hasten down the stairway
'Mid a gloom so chill and dread,
And their footsteps sound
From the walls around
And the arches damp o'erhead.

“Thy keys again, oh sexton,
T' unlock each mouldering tomb!”
As said, 'tis done—
But one by one
They ope on lifeless gloom.

With frantic steps Sir Roger
Does haste from door to door;
Until they stand,
A quaking band,
Nor further may explore.

For all around about them
The walls loomed black and low.

“Is naught beyond?”
Sir Roger moaned;
The sexton answered, “No.”

But as with hearts despairing
They stood debating thus,
The torchlight shone
On the polished stone
Of an old sarcophagus.

“What is 't?” cried out Sir Roger,
In tones so strange and wild;
“Mayhap there lies,
Hid from our eyes,
Fair Isabel, my child!”

They gathered all around it;
But the massive lid defied
Their utmost strength,
Till, crazed at length,
Sir Roger madly cried,

“Out on your puny sinews!”
And rushed full at the stone:
A mighty strain—
And broke in twain
It on the earth lay prone.

“Oh Isabel, my Isabel!”
But out-sprang the crimson tide;
And with one cry
Of agony,
Upon her breast he died.

With faces horror stricken,
By the torches' fitful glare
They gazed upon
That hollowed stone—
At those so silent there.

A white and bony skeleton;
And in his arms lay fair
Dead Isabel,
And o'er him fell
The glory of her hair.

And—who can read the secret?
Was it love for him, though dead?
Her arms around
Him fast were wound,
And on his breast her head.

And with no heart to part them,
Entombed they left them thus,
And o'er them placed
The lid defaced
Of the old sarcophagus.

And on it there was carven,
In letters deep and wide,
Naught but the name—
“Sir Airthishame,
And Isabel, his bride.”

And once in every hundred years—
So runs the ancient tale—
Forth from the tomb
Alive do come
Sir Airthishame and Bel.

The altar door flies open,
And the ghostly robéd priest
Of them, now twain,
Makes one again;
And when the words have ceased,

From out the choir weird music
Rolls through the ancient pile,
And a ghostly throng
In measured song
Move down the vaulted aisle.

But as the dawn shines greyly
Through the storied windows old,
In the sleep of the tomb
They rest, till bells boom
That a century round has rolled,

And they sometimes hear, who listen,
Near the spot where their love was told,
 The mournful wail
 Of Isabel
As she haunts the ruins old.

She mourns for her troth there plighted ;
For her vanished girlhood's dream ;
 For the death she found
 In wedlock's bond,
Though at first all bright did seem.

Are there none among the living,
Who mourn their vanished dreams—
 Those dreams so bright
 That the darkest night
Was lit by their radiant beams ?

Are there none who, at the dawning
Of wedded life, too late,
 Find out, with dread,
 That they love one dead ?
God save from like evil fate ! ”

The last line, spoken in a deep, low tone, full of inward pain, is finished ; and his voice, which had now risen, now sunk to almost a whisper, coloring to the life each figure in the swiftly moving panorama, ceases, and a dead silence succeeds. He moves away and is gone. One by one, and almost silently, good-nights are said. But as I kiss my wife a last good-night, no fear but that the Angel of Death may tarry in his coming for the other, after the one has been borne by him away, is carried into my dreams.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GLEN HOUSE, AND AN ESSAY.

MIST and rain confront us in the morning, but we sally out and go through the old Tip-Top House, built in 1852, of rough stone, a story and a half, and now used as a lumber room, and which must have been most uncomfortable when used by "human warious." Within a few feet is the signal station, cosy and comfortable, as well it may be, and near it the observatory, from which only driving mist is now to be observed. On a rock at the extreme summit is rudely carved, "P. Brooks, 1823;" and he has doubtless, after tumbling over the stones of life, been long since absorbed by the ocean of eternity.

At 10.15, the cloud still resting dense around us, although the rain has stopped, and the oracle, to wit, the clerk, having announced that it wouldn't probably clear that day, we hold a counsel of war, and determine that, notwithstanding it is Sunday, the strain upon our religious feelings will be much greater moping up here, waiting for a view more extended than some twenty feet, than in spending a portion of the day in reaching the Glen House where, I tell Aunt Eunice, services will probably be held in the afternoon. So the others take the stage, and Jemima and I start off on foot, although Aunt Hepzibah protests—she doesn't know Jemima's pedestrian powers as I do; for, like most people who have done much mountain climbing, we never take a conveyance, where a view is to be had, if we can help it.

A cold, wintry wind, thick with driving mist, sweeps from the northwest. But as we get a little lower down, and the great bulk of the mountain makes itself felt, the driving cloud is divided, and we, descending on the southeast side, see it sailing away on either hand; while far below in the valleys, great scattered masses rise slowly from the depths, are caught by the upper winds, are twisted and turned and broken, and, like the spirits of the vanished night, torn from their dark, deep hollows, writhing, sail away toward the engulfing sea.

Where arboreal vegetation begins, we notice little spruces growing on the lee side of rocks and the roadside walls, their tops seldom daring to show above the shelter, or if daring, cut down as with a knife by the fierce winter winds. Just above the Glen House, thousands of feet above, and where a superb view of it and the valley in which it lies is to be had, there is, in the roadside wall, a piece of rock broken from the ledge, the grain and consequent shape of which is like the curved back of an easy-chair; and seated in this rest of nature's and man's providing, we look down from the vast height on the Lilliputian life below—the toy house, the midget men and women, the tiny fences, the little fields, the smaller, greener meadows, and the seemingly meaningless activity of a far-away and insect life—while to the left a black chasm-valley yawns, a scene of utter desolation, where no life is, nor can exist, and the only moving things are wreaths of mist creeping slowly up its side toward a huge snowbank that lies, a memory of winter, in a northern cleft.

Further down, we meet a stage whose four horses toil slowly up and shy at us to relieve the monotony of the pull; pass the stage-house half way down, chained to the earth; pass milestones, relieving fatigue by the shortening distance; walk over a little level stretch which seems, by contrast, as if it were up hill. The shrubbery grows taller; the forests appear; we walk under their shade, and by deep, dark, fascinating glens; meet another stage; leave the forest and shadow, and come out upon a meadow and sunshine; cross a little stream; cross another meadow; ascend a little rise, and at 12.25 walk, the dusty observed of clean observers, up the Glen House steps, having accomplished the eight miles in two hours and eight minutes; whereupon I congratulate Jemima.

• And, after dinner, as we sit on the piazza, and gaze at Madison, Adams, Jefferson and Washington, the cloud leaves that highest peak, the Summit House stands bathed in light, and, notwithstanding the day, we curse our fate and the hotel clerk and the deceitful morning cloud: but Aunt Hepzibah says it is a righteous judgment upon us all for having traveled on Sunday.

Sure enough, notice is given that at four o'clock "Even Song" will be held in the parlors, and to Even Song we go, although Aunt Eunice sighs for her Presbyterian service (as should I, if I sighed for any), and Aunt Hepzibah hopes that there won't

be "any fiddle-faddle." As for Uncle Robert, he evidently considers it a good opportunity to get an afternoon nap in quiet, for he immediately goes to sleep. The Professor is away bug-hunting.

The officiating clergyman is a most beautiful curate, Reverend Field Flowers by name, whose sleek hair is parted in the middle, and whose voice is as soft as his looks. He takes for his text "Broken Vessels," and builds up of the pieces an appeal for subscriptions to a chapel to be erected at some (by me) unpronounceable place (he has the latest Hindoostanee pronunciation however) in India, to the memory of a sainted cheild, who departed this life at the advanced age of six, after having besought the numerous company around her death-bed not to cry, but to gather sufficient of this world's paltry pelf from the four quarters of the globe (she seems to have been particular about the four) to erect the said chapel, where other little girls could be sweetly converted, and taught how wrong it was to be burnt alive on the bodies of their deceased husbands.

During the singing of a hymn, to a tune distorted from an early Gregorgian chant, by a volunteer choir, of which the tenor was the most noticeable, from his impetuosity of bray, the (dinner) plate was passed around—and the curate doubtless realized enough to pay for his week's board.

This was Jemima's only comment: "I wasn't so much interested in his sermon, as I was in watching his cuffs jump up and down."

It is wonderful how prehensily active as to quarters the waiters are, and how necessary a judicious distribution of those handy pieces of silver is to the proper filling of the three-times-a-day recurring vacuum in the human frame. Also how the head waiter manages to keep his right arm firmly in its socket, considering the intensity with which he shoots it up to attract the attention of the incoming guest, in order to his proper seating. Also how many different types of people there are in a huge caravansary like this. There is one couple about whom Jemima would like to weave a romance—but it would be a rather unpleasant romance, I fear. She is intense: yellow hair; large blue eyes; deep circles under them; good profile; thin lips; square jaw; slender figure; thin arms; long, slim, white, nervous hands; body bent a little forward while walking; goes straight ahead, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, and when she lays her empty egg-shell in the

saucer suddenly *crushes* it. He is fat, easy, and fifty, and follows her lead with smiling stolidity. How long will she be content to lead him? How long before she will follow—to ruin, perhaps—some stronger will than her own?

Here is a man who, one day, helped himself to the greater part of a small piece of butter left in the dish before him; when, seeing his neighbor, a stranger, about to take the small remainder, passed him his own butter-plate, notwithstanding his polite protestations, and took the remainder himself.

There is an odd young man whom I met one evening in the smoking-room, and he thus pleasantly chatted about a neighbor of his at the table: "She is a vinegary old, or rather middle-aged lady, and always wants the lights turned down at supper—says they hurt her eyes. I said one evening in her hearing—she never speaks to me by any chance—that I guessed I'd have to bring a dark lantern to eat by. She always brings a worsted shawl to table, not to use, but to get under my chair. It always does. When she has finished her meal, she rises and begins to pull. I don't notice. The lady opposite, smothering her laughter, says, 'Mr. Henry, you're on the lady's shawl.' I don't hear, and lean over the table, thus leaning harder on the shawl, and say, 'What did you say?' She repeats. I then say to my neighbor in the politest manner, 'Oh, I beg pardon,' and raise the side of my chair that isn't on the shawl, and go on eating. The old lady pulls again, looking daggers, but saying never a word. Then I look up by accident, and find her there, and beg pardon again, and raise my chair until the shawl is almost released, but catch it again just in time, and go on eating. Then she gets mad, and jerks the shawl, and leaves a little piece under my chair-leg, and stalks away, only one end of the shawl over her shoulder, the bulk of it dragging on the floor. And yet she hates me!" At the end of which narration the smoking-room was in a roar.

We have had a ball, which is to say that the feminine portion of our community hung, prior thereto, on several varieties of tenter-hooks, the young and pretty lest they shouldn't have beaux enough; their mammas lest those beaux shouldn't be matrimonially eligible, and the would-be young and pretty lest they shouldn't have any beaux at all.

The eventful evening arrived. The ladies were out in full force, and were mostly adorned in costumes in the extreme of ball-room loveliness—that is to say, as little above the waist as possible, and as much below that dividing line as impossible. The men were likewise out in full force—all the force there was—which was as one to ten. We married men were comparatively safe—but oh the unmarried! and particularly oh the two particularly eligible unmarried! There were two—the one by reason of much money, and nothing else; the other by reason of much (supposed) title, and less than nothing else. And how the fair Amazons did lay siege! They charged in companies, in regiments, in platoons. They employed every battery of smile, of meaning glance, of meaningless flattery. They laid every snare of evident charm of person and supposed charm of mind. And if the besieged did not capitulate at once and promise to commit unheard-of bigamy, or did not tear from the room stark, staring mad, it was because, on the one hand, they assumed these attentions to be, if anything less than, their rightful due, or, on the other, the whelm of flattery could not penetrate their pachydermatous minds. By reason of the above massing of forces, the few remaining unmarried men (and some married) were able to escape with but one companion apiece to the cool and confidential shades of the piazzas. The Professor and Aunt Eunice occupied one of them. As for Uncle Robert, he essayed to somewhat permanently occupy another, in company with a sweet maid of some eighteen summers (masculinity of any color, race or previous condition of servitude was at a premium), when Aunt Hepzibah sailed by on the arm of a man who looked as if he had much rather not, saying as she passed, in a voice wherein the claws protruded visibly from the velvet, “Ah, Robert, you there?”—and the wretched Robert, feeling said claws sink into his soul, gave up the ghost, and went and interred himself, with his partner, in the parlor.

As Jemima and I were retiring to our room, we observed the Professor putting out his shoes. As I was doing the like with mine, he put his head out of his door, and commenced fumbling with his. I inquired what was the matter; to which he replied that he had forgotten whether he had left them inside or outside, as it would be uncomfortable for them to stand otherwise than as they were worn. (!) Reporting which to Jemima she said, “What a sympathetic man!”

We were just putting out our light, when there came a somewhat timid knock at our door. Opening it, I discovered the Professor in a state of *deshabille*, and in his hand several sheets of manuscript, which he handed me, begging my pardon for troubling me, but saying he would like my wife's and my opinion upon it in the morning, and that he was impelled to write it by witnessing "the shameless undress of the ladies this evening," and that he intended to publish it in a paper to which he was a contributor. I took it with thanks, and Jemima read it aloud while I lay smoking—and here it is, *verbatim et literatim*.

WHAT IS MODESTY?

A short discourse upon some of the social usages of the day.

"What is truth?" said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer," quaintly exclaims Bacon. I would ask, "What is Modesty?" and I fain would wait for a reply; but I fear that none will or can be forthcoming, except, "We can not tell; for there is no such thing as real, *inherent* modesty." This seems a hard answer, and, says my fair reader, one utterly untrue. Perhaps so, oh maiden, but are you sure that many or some things that you do and count modest, are counted modest by your sister of another country, or another mode of life, or another social standing? What you count modest at one time and place, do not even you yourself count immodest at another? You would not care to wear the same (or rather as little) dress as your African or Patagonian sisters, and yet I doubt not that they consider themselves perfectly modest. You—I am speaking to the "society girl" of the day—you might not consider it proper to wander off with your swain, in perfect freedom from all chaperonage, amid the solitudes of fields and woody dells, nor to play "Copenhagen" and other kissing and embracing games, as does your country sister with absence of all thought of impropriety. And yet take her with you to the ball-room and seashore for the first time, and observe the blush on her cheek and her averted eyes, while upon your cheek is, naturally enough, no blush—else would you blush for yourself—and you watch with interest the dancers and bathers, and later on are one of them. And yet both you and she are honestly modest, each in your own way.

And further, gently-bred maiden, will you do at one time and place what you will at another? Let us see. You are going to a ball, and dressing time arrives. You repair to your room and doff your dress, when just then your mother calls from her room adjoining, and you open your door and are passing to hers, when your brother's friend, who is stopping over night for the ball, steps from his room opposite, and meets you face to face. You scream, rush back into your room and slam the door, while he as hurriedly retreats into his. An hour later, having in the meantime donned a dress which exposes much more of your person than was visible to Mr. Smith when you met him at your door, you sail into the ball-room on his arm, listening to his humble apologies for the *contretemps* of the hall, and become, if you are well formed—as I am presuming you to be—the cynosure of all eyes masculine, including Mr. Smith's. Now which was the more *innately* and *really* modest costume of the two—your undress or your dress?

The ball is over, and you, in your *robe de nuit*, are passing from your sister's room to yours, after chatting over the various events of the evening. Mr. Smith, coming up stairs from the smoking-room, again meets you face to face. This time you are really angry and outraged—and purposely do not descend the next morning in time to bid him good-bye. And yet your night-dress *entirely* covered your person, and was, in the abstract, an attractive gown.

The following summer you are at Cape May; and your pretty bathing skirt, reaching to your knees, and your stockings to match—to wit, your bathing-dress—form the basis of compliments from Mr. Smith and other of your friends whom you meet as you walk into the water, and with whom you bathe. In the afternoon, sitting upon the piazza chatting, a truant gust of wind comes playfully along, and lifts, for only two or three inches, your filmy skirt, exposing the shapely ankle underneath. Mr. Smith—not quite ready enough at self-sacrifice—gazes for an instant at the small portion of Nature's handiwork, and, before he can gallantly look away, you catch him at it and, in your mind, set him down as lacking in gentlemanly instincts, and proceed to quietly freeze him. And yet where Mr. Smith unwittingly saw an inch, you had deliberately exposed to his eyes the greater portion of an ell.

Now to suppose an extreme, the mere mention of which I fear you will not pardon. Suppose Mr. Smith had asked you some

evening in your parlor, your mother or your sister being of course present, to unbutton three or four buttons at your throat, and show him a few square inches of the creaminess you had so liberally exposed at the ball. Would you or yours have ever spoken to him again? Or—a more dreadful supposition—suppose he had asked you to lift an inch or two of your dress, and allow him to gaze for an instant at the shapely ankle at which, with its attendant leg, he had, unrebuked, fearlessly looked for an hour upon the shore the previous summer. Would you not have called in the men of your house, and would not Mr. Smith have flown, hatless and overcoatless, from the hurriedly opened door?

And yet which was the worse—the deliberate exposure of much, or the request for a modest look at a little? I know you will cry to me “*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*” referring to the much—and shall I not cry to you the same, referring to the little? When Edward picked up the garter, I wonder whether he had an evil thought to cloak by condemning it in the others? Perhaps so—let us hope not. Sometimes wolves cry “wolf,” to tempt away the trusty dog.

Now I am not a prude, yet I would ask for consistency which, like most jewels, is hard to find. If modest in some things, why not modest in all? (God preserve us from the converse, however!) Why should a girl whom we think and like to believe sincerely modest, expose herself so, that even the men who feast their eyes on her charms exclaim, if they respect her, while chatting over the after-ball or after-bath cigar, “What a pity! How can she do it!” Do you know, lady mine, that there is more *real* modesty among men than among women? You may not believe it, but I do. In conclusion, let us write, if not upon our doorposts, then upon our hearts: *Consistency, thou art a jewel!*

“Whew!” ejaculated I, (circumspectly).

“Ridiculous! Shameful!” said Jemima. “The man must be a brute!”

“Of course, my dear,” I replied, “but——”

* * * * *

The next morning, as I handed the MS. to the Professor, I remarked that my wife did not approve of it.

She froze him for two whole days.

CHAPTER XII.

VARIOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST.

How sweet these days of utter idleness, when one wanders with the companion whose presence is ever a rest and recreation, from one charm of Nature's handiwork to another—from dark ravine to breezy mountain top; through shaded, mossy woods, where feathery fronds of ferns hide with their graceful greenery the broken rocks beneath; along the winding roads, where shade gives place to sun and sun to shade, and every turn frames in the arching trees some pretty picture of a wood or stream, or spreads a mighty canvas of green hills and distant, jagged peaks and tremulous, summer haze and lightly sailing clouds.

And so we wander; and our souls now rise to God in praise of His great works, or drop to earth to note His lesser deeds: see how each blade is perfect in its form; how rare the blushes of the sweet wild-rose; how every bird is joyful with its mate, and how their young are nested on the boughs. But this we also learn, Jemima says, that when we smile, all Nature seems to smile in sympathy, but when we sorrow, she is but a pitiless tyrant, unmindful of our grief. And as we lie on a little, grassy, tree-crowned knoll, she repeats:

NATURE REFLECTS OUR MOODS.

Our spirits laugh—and sunny lands are blithe
With winsome smiles that dimple from the leaves;
With joyous notes of birds; with insect lives
That play with glad gyrations on the air;
With skies that shine with loving radiance;
With sparkles from the rock; with incense sweet,
Swung from the glowing censers of the flowers;
With that quick, subtile sympathy between
Our inward light and Earth's reflected glow—
This when we laugh.

Our spirits laugh—and storms but nerve our thews
To gay encounter with their rushing winds,
Their driven drops, or whirling flakes of snow :
But gift our eyes to note the majesty
Of grey cloud piled on cloud of darker hue ;
Of lightning's wrath ; of crashing, bolt-felled tree ;
Of rolling war-drum of the elements—
And this too when we laugh.

But when we weep, how Nature, mocking, smiles !
How cruel-careless all the joyous life
That laughs and sports while we look aching on—
Each laugh a poniard in our bleeding hearts ;
Each sport of purpose to augment our woe !
This when we weep.

And when we weep, the pitiless storm but beats
Upon a wretch already beaten down :
The lightning flashes and the thunder rolls
To fright one cowering from his inward dread ;
And black storm-cloud is not more dark than that
Which sweeps, a horror, o'er our anguished souls.
And this too when we weep.

Wherefore, oh Brother, though thou art
Of Nature the most noble part,
Know that her wheels relentlessly
Roll on, nor swerve nor stop for thee !

Her varied face is but a glass
Wherein thy soul may view, as pass,
Its lights of joy, its shades of woe—
And while thou liv'st 'twill e'er be so !

But though a shade dims every light—
Though day is swallowed up in night—
Peer through the shades for coming light !
Remember, day succeeds the night !

“ Is it not so, John ? ” she said.

“ Yes, dear,” I replied, “ it is. We are but a part of nature ;
and, as a part, that unanswerable question, why was creation
created ? applies to us. Why were we created ? Theologians say,

‘for the glory of God.’ As fully one-half of the race is, by the creed of those same theologians, damned, surely their damnation—their eternal torment—can not redound to the glory of a merciful God. And if He—having the power to call that out of chaos which becomes a sentient, never-dying soul—had chosen to change that something into an immediately-glorified being, enjoying happiness to all eternity, instead of clothing it with suffering flesh, and dooming it to the possibility, probability, certainty almost, of enduring the extreme of anguish, how much better had been our lot! All nature is but one vast battle-field—one life saved at the expense of another, perhaps many, lost; which life itself, if not the stronger, had perished to benefit some life, now extinct that it may live. It is always ‘the survival of the fittest,’ that is, the strongest—the one best able to endure the onslaught of its fellows, of its rivals, of the world, of the very atmosphere that surrounds the world. The soil is formed by the disintegration—death—of the rocks: the grasses draw their sustenance from the thereby impoverished soil: the trees from the soil enriched by the decaying bodies of the dead grasses: the herbivorous and graminivorous animals from the killed grasses and herbs: the carnivorous from the killed graminivorous and herbivorous: man, the most destructive, from the death of all; and he not only slays that he may eat and live, but slays that he may survive and live—grass and herb and animal and his fellow-man all fall before the him who is the strongest, and, triumphant, he survives, and is, or believes himself to be, happy. And yet what is happiness? Is it not but the cessation for the moment of misery?”

“Oh no, John dear,” she exclaimed in a frightened tone. “Surely happiness is not the mere cessation of misery. Am I not sometimes really happy?—always with you.”

“You pet!” I cried, kissing her, “and as near to happiness as I ever come, or shall come in this life, is by your side. But, darling, reflect. Is happiness ever wholly unalloyed? Are we not almost always haunted by some regret, some care, some want unsatisfied? And when we are not—or are proximately not—we say we are happy. Therefore is there any such thing as happiness *per se*—a thing by itself—one might say, an entity? Is it not the proximate, never absolute—would that it were, but never absolute, absence of misery—misery of greater or less degree, but

always misery? For all unhappiness is but misery, slight and easily borne—we are so used to it—or intensified and hardly borne. Therefore who can answer, Why was creation created? Why were we created? No one. Sufficient that we are. Let us make the best of it; let us peer through the shades for coming light, remembering day succeeds the night. And as we believe—oh pity them that do not, for they are of all men most miserable, having so little in this life to live for, and nothing beyond the grave—as we believe in a life to come; in a world beyond, above, surpassing this of ours, wherein the fleeting shadow that we seek below, will live and reign personified, and we her subjects, catching of her glow, shall hug it to our breasts, till every heart shall beam, reflecting hers, and we shall be—not merely live—shall be a very part of Happiness; so let us live this life, that we shall gain that life to come. And not merely live as to exist, but *live*—use every muscle of our minds, every nerve of our souls—for *every upward earthly step of mind or soul shall land us on a higher plane beyond this world*. What says the poet of

THE LEARNED DEAD.

The life is gone : the moveless eyeballs stare
Upon a world unseen—the world we know,
But gaze upon a world beyond our ken,
A world known only to the dead and God.

Whence has the knowledge fled that once was his?
Obedient unto mandatory will,
Is its strong service dead, is that will dead,
Shall all his learning rot with that dead brain?

Or shall he yet, in some far higher sphere,
Call from a mind that, old but now, is young,
His store of knowledge, ever waxing more,
To charm and guide the other dwellers there?

And do not they who, in this primal school,
Have toiled to gain the only gold death spares,
Win greener laurels in that higher sphere,
And win more quickly from their earthly toil?"

"John," cried she, "we will toil for that gold—the only gold death spares—that we may buy a higher place in that land. And

we will give that gold, so far as we may, to our children, that they may likewise win a higher place."

"My love, are you glad that you are alive?"

"Why certainly, dear," she said, looking her surprise at the question.

"Have you ever suffered?"

"Sometimes."

"If you had not been alive, you would not have suffered."

"Why of course not, John," smiling in spite of herself.

"That is exactly it," I cried. "If you had not been alive you would not have suffered, and many have suffered much more than you, even to the extremity of suffering. And no happiness that the fact of being alive ever brought them, has been able to compensate them for that suffering. Do you remember Job's moan in his anguish?"

Let the day perish wherein I was born,
And the night which said, There is a man-child conceived.
Let that day be darkness;
Let not God regard it from above,
Neither let the light shine upon it.
Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own;
Let a cloud dwell upon it;
Let all that maketh black the day terrify it.
As for that night, let thick darkness seize upon it;
Let it look for light, but have none;
Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning:
Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb,
Nor hid trouble from mine eyes.
Why died I not from the womb?

Now you speak of our children. *Is it right to bring a soul into the world who may possibly echo Job's moan?"*

She looked at me with an amazement that gradually blanched into despair.

"Oh John—my husband—you can not mean what you say! What, wrong to bring a baby, my very own, into the world? To be with me, to be a part of me, to love, to cherish, to caress—my own, my own little ba—" and she flung herself on my knees in a passion of tears.

"My darling, my wife, my own dear love," I cried, clasping her in my arms, "it shall be with you as with all loving wives—your baby shall crow and laugh in your arms, and its tiny form shall be enfolded—jealously enfolded—in your love. *But remember that no love, no devotion on the part of a parent toward his or her child, can possibly atone for the injury of birth.* Therefore give to your child such love and *loving* guidance, and so train up and develop his every attribute of mind and body for his highest, noblest good and greatest service, that he, knowing that in the universal course of nature he was born, will not reproach you for the gift of life, but will thank you that the evils of that involuntary gift have been so mitigated by your love and foresight. And perchance, when you wait for him on that farther shore, your mother's heart may swell with loving pride to see him welcomed, as of kin, by the high and holy intelligences of that land."

And so smiles soon shone through tears. When, lifting her lovely eyes, glistening as with the shining drops left by a passing shower, she said, with smiling show of petulance, "One would think, to hear you talk, that you were a real old misanthrope, while I—" and the light in her eyes was not of smiles, but of love—"I know how light-hearted and happy you are, and how you always seem to try to make the best of everything."

"Thank you for the compliment," I replied gaily, "but that does not prevent me from moralizing. If a man is cast upon an uninhabited island, it is a poor way to spend his time to sit down and repine—and starve. It is much better to make himself as comfortable as circumstances will permit, so as to be in good health when he is rescued. If, thinking as I do, and knowing that I am alive and can't help it, I did not try to make the best of everything, I should either go mad, or kill myself."

"But you won't!?" anxiously.

"Hear me swear it—I won't!" and in a gale of laughter we walked on up the hill. (How swift the transition, in our human minds, from sun to shadow, and again to sun! And how happy that it is!) And as we walked, Jemima sang,

Oh ye cares that infest the day,
Go fold your tents like the Arabs,
And benignantly keep away!

“What is that?” she cried, as a turn in the path disclosed a blanched, dead tree, to which was fastened a paper, bearing the word, in large letters, WARNING!

We went up to it and read:

WARNING!

We walked atop the hill,
 She and I,
And every little thrill
 From her eye,
As it swept the wide expanse
With a comprehensive glance,
And then looked at me askance,
 Drove me nigh

To distraction, as we walked,
 She and I;
To proposal, as we talked
 Of the sky,
Of the rocky mountain tops,
Of champagne and how it pops,
Of what partners at the hops
 We decry.

As my earnest gaze met hers
 She, not I,
Blushed, and stooping, gathered furze
 Growing by;
And it seemed to me her glance
Sought no more the wide expanse,
But with loving look, askance,
 Called me nigh.

As I clasped her bending form,
 She, not I,
Rose with quick and withering scorn—
 And I sigh
When I think how soon I learned
That my love was not returned—
That an *ignis-fatuus* burned
 In her eye.

We both laughed. "I suppose *he* wished he was dead," said Jemima.

"I presume he did," I replied. "Poor fellow; another illusion gone! I wonder whether his charitable purpose will be carried out, and some other fellow, about to rush to his fate, be warned in time. This looks like a place where such warnings might be necessary."

"Of course he won't," she said; "men never are! They think that a girl is fairly dying for them, just because she happens to look at them. They are so stupid!"

"Yes, I know," I answered abstractedly, "they are stupid. Never take any hints——"

"What?!"

"To keep away, of course I mean. Now I was one of them. Never could see any hint to keep away; never——"

The result of this speech I will not harrow the reader's soul by relating.

CHAPTER XIII.

TO MONTREAL.

A COUNCIL of war has decided that our time in barracks, so to speak, is over, and that we must again set out on the march. Therefore the tents are struck by Bolus and Victorine—and what harmony is theirs!—the Generalissimoess cries Forward! and the march is begun. The body of the army goes by heavy train-wagon, while Jemima and I, being of the lighter grade, are thrown out as skirmishers, and depart in advance in a two-seated “buck-board” for Gorham.

For the benefit of the unhappy who have never ridden in a buck-board, let me say that if between its shafts you harness a good, strong horse, and put upon the plank upon which your seat rests enough weight besides your own (either human or otherwise) to ballast the conveyance properly, you can ride over more stumps and rocks and “corduroy” road in a given space and time, easily and jauntily, than in any other vehicle known, if not to man, at least to me.

Our driver, easily attired in flannel shirt and corduroy breeches, the latter comfortably stuck into a pair of boots whose palmy, blackened days had faded into those sere and yellow, occupies the intervals between the chewings of his tobacco-cud and the fleckings at his horse with his long-lashed whip, in discourse, with a view to the hospitable entertainment of the stranger. During which he informs us that Mount Washington is owned by “the Pingry heirs and a Mr. Coe, of Bangor,” and that the Summit House pays the owners \$12,000 and the railway \$2,000 a year rental for the privilege of being where they are. That he thinks that the mountain would hardly pay to be laid out in building-lots, but that he had heard that the owners had offered to trade it for a city somewhere—yes, a whole city—but where he couldn't say. That he had heard, too, that the owners of a big mountain over in Europe—yes, Mount Blank sounded like it—had

offered to trade it for Mount Washington, with a good deal to boot, but that old Pingry's estate warn't quite settled, and they couldn't pay the difference. That the last of June or the middle of September is the best time for clear weather on the top. That old Hayes found some springs up there on Hayes' Mountain and built a house there, but that it didn't pay very big, and blew down about three years ago. That it makes him larf eternally to see city fellers get themselves all tangled up in their fixin's, tryin' to catch traout daown there in Peabody, when there hadn't been any traout there for years 'n' more. And so on, as we follow the windings of the brawling Peabody, jolting (the wheels, not we) over stones, and tipping (the wheels and we) over stumps, rolling out of patches of grateful shade and into stretches of graceless heat; watching the towering ranges on either side of the broadening little valley, with their varied tops and still more varied names—Carter, Imp, Moriah, and so on and so on—till the railway comes in sight, and with the railway, Gorham, and with Gorham, the station, and with the station, the Alpine House, and we step out, and turn our ride into money, and the buck-board and mountain life sway away, and the railway remains.

From the window of the sleeper, on the 6 P. M. train for Montreal—distance 206 miles, schedule time 12 hours and 15 minutes!—we watch the beautiful New Hampshire scenery—beautiful from a romantic, but not from an utilitarian point of view. For, while mountain peaks, invading the sky, are grand in the travelers' eyes; and rocks, jagged and grey, are picturesque; and in swampy vistas, among the straight, solemn stems of the cypress and down by the twisted roots and over the black, glassy pools, fancies sport and goblins lurk and shapes of the nether world come and go; yet all these, to the farmer, may not be inspiring, as he breaks his plowshare among the rocks, and slips on the slimy roots, and regards with a sorrowful eye the scanty ears of corn and the scattered growth of wheat, like the infrequent hairs upon a sterile pate; and he may sigh for less scenery and more mold.

As the night came down, the clouds closed above us, dark and heavy, and soon the rain was beating against the black panes—squares of darkness in the sides of the car. And as they struck, they formed strings of pale-white pearls, ever slipping and slipping and moving down in endless succession. And as Jemima

lay on my shoulder she said : " When you watch the rain drops, dear, and see how they seem to cling to their support until they become too heavy, and then drop off ; and almost before you have seen the last of one, another has taken its place, did you ever think how like we are to the rain drops—we cling to this life until the burden becomes too heavy, and then we lay it down ; but some other steps into our place, and we are hardly missed ? "

We cross the New Hampshire line and the bridge at North Stratford at the same moment ; run (or crawl) across Vermont, and reach Island Pond at eight. As the Canadian line is but sixteen miles further on, the custom-house officers are in force as to numbers, but not as to activity ; for while we take a leisurely supper at the adjacent hotel, and sit on the piazza watching the moon rise over the mountains, they take a leisurely look at the few trunks and valises, and probably go to bed, as possibly do also our conductor and engineer, for a short nap, for not before 10.30 do we slowly move out of the station—10.30 being schedule time ! The Grand Trunk is an excellent road for the traveler going to be hanged, but not for the traveler more anxious to reach his destination ; and the smoke would help the first-mentioned traveler to realize his probable further staying-place.

The sunrise redly breaks upon a dead level country, dead level as far as the sight (why eye ?) can reach, and upon the bright, unpainted, tinned spires and roofs of scattered churches, over which the cross gleams, making one believe oneself in France again. Shines upon land but little farmed, and mostly given up to young and growing, and old, burnt and dead pines. Illumes with a fleeting touch of color, wretched little hamlets of wretched little huts clustered about fine stone churches and large rectories. Peeps through the broken, shiftless fences, whose two slight posts, wattled or pegged together, uphold the scrawny lengths of rails, and over the slender gates, like sections of bannister from a stairway, and makes of the telegraph wires long black lines, which appear, as we fly along, to be continually trying to rise skyward, and as continually knocked down by the impassive poles.

As the morning wears on, market gardens begin to appear, and with them barbed wire fences, and with them more and better houses, and with them civilization. The Southeastern Railroad track runs up and spins along beside us, and, away to the north

across the great St. Lawrence, Montreal, around and upon her Mont Real, lies, dim and misty in the summer haze, the shipping making a little grove between her feet and the shining water; the spires and houses creeping up toward the wooded, flattened summit of her mountain, which rises, alone, above the level land and river shore, while the long Victoria bridge stretches upon its many piers from the city toward us and the southern shore—an arm stretched out toward the vim and power of Yankee-land.

The view is blotted out by the portal of the bridge, and through its hollow, iron length we roar; come out and cross the wide canal; pass by an old stone house with beds of flowers and shaded doorway seats, seeming a relic from ante-railway times; are landed at a dirty and dingy station (behind time, of course); get ourselves and traps into very American hacks, and are jolted away to the Windsor Hotel, one of the finest on the continent.

CHAPTER XIV.

MONTREAL, AND A FEW OF ITS PECULIARITIES.

JACQUES CARTIER, that intrepid mariner of a by-gone day, having been commissioned by the then King of France, Francis I., to explore and, if possible, extend the French fishing-grounds, sailed through the fog and over the choppy seas of the Grand Banks, and discovered the new-found land, Newfoundland. Not content, he, in 1534, sailed further west, and discovered the mainland of Canada, (so called from the Indian word "Kanata," a village, or collection of huts or wigwams). Again uncontented (what would the world be if everybody had been contented?) in 1535 he sailed still further west, passing the heights upon which, in later days, Quebec was to rest and Montcalm to die, sailing up the great St. Lawrence, and reaching, at the confluence of it and its rival the Ottawa, an Indian village, Hochelaga, whose pointed tents, with their ascending wreaths of smoke, nestled among the trees upon the southern shore of a triangular island surrounded by the waters of the two great streams. Above the village rose a hill, the only one of any size along that shore, and it he named Mont Real.

But the climate (and perhaps the Indians) and Cartier and his Frenchmen could not agree, and he soon sailed away homeward, and for a hundred years or so Hochelaga saw not the white men, except as they came to barter for skins. In 1642, however, the Indians having been pretty much civilized (literally) to death, and the village having become a trading-post of some importance, a town was founded upon its site and called La Ville de Marie. But the name of its mountain clung to the infant town, and at last La Ville de Marie disappeared, and Mont Real—Montreal—reigned in its stead.

Come with Jemima and me to the top of the mountain and the pretty park thereupon, and behold the view. To the north, the Sault au Recollet, an arm from the Ottawa, separates our island from the Isle de Jesu, which itself is cut off from the mainland by another encircling arm. The glint of these river-arms

shines among the trees and between the meadows and farms, which last stretch away, level and green, to the forests on the horizon line. To the west, the broad Ottawa flows through its Lac des deux Montagnes, while, farther south, the St. Lawrence spreads out, brilliant and lazy in the sun, into the Lac St. Louis; gathers force as it contracts its flood; roars savagely down the Lachine Rapids; broadens smilingly as it passes the town, and flows, quiet and grand, to the east and the sea.

At our feet, and to the south, the city descends the steep slopes, and spreads away level to the attenuated little grove of masts that fringes the water's edge, its spires and domes seeming like arms upraised to the God beyond the deep-blue sky, while the bright tinned roofs flash smiles back at the sun. Beyond, the broad bosom of the river gleams in white light, spanned by the long line of the Victoria bridge, whose black length and huge piers are reproduced in the water's mirror underneath, and beyond the other shore, the level farms stretch away, broken here and there by copses and little hills, to the Beloeil Mountains and the still more distant mountains in "the States," which melt into the sky.

We leave the park in which we have been standing, and, passing the restaurant, where animated parties and couples are partaking of refreshments, solid and otherwise, among whom sit several fat and jolly priests wearing three-cornered hats and long, black coats like petticoats, jump into our hack, and zigzag down the mountain's side.

What a queer town this is! Stolid English grafted on vivacious French, the whole leavened by Yankee proximity. Quitting our hack, we wander away by the by-ways and high-ways, through streets straight and crooked, and bearing, almost every one, French names, and representing all the saints in the calendar. All around us is heard the jabber of French tongues; and in the business portions the carters' cries and oaths, likewise in French, create an almost American stir and bustle. For, except that the city is somewhat Frenchy, and in some parts old and Old World looking, and adopts some of the universal French-Canadian customs and peculiarities, it is very like an American city, and therefore somewhat depressingly familiar.

But these few exceptions vary the dull flat of use, and remind us that we are in "furrin' parts." For instance: All the steeples

are covered with bright (when it isn't rusty), unpainted tin, which glistens and glows in the sunlight, and looks, afar off, like a beacon; and almost all the churches and houses are roofed in like manner, the joints of the tin roofing being laid on, as to the roof, "slantindicularly"—neither horizontal nor perpendicular—presumably that they may have a downward angle, that the rain may run off the more easily. The houses are all built of a greyish limestone, in which may sometimes be detected the fossil shells of minute shell-fish, of whose infinite and infinitesimal lives and deaths the stone is a monument. And all the houses have, in the winter, double window-sashes, the outer immovable, the fresh air (and a very little evidently goes a long way) being let in by a long slit or opening in the lower part of the woodwork, which slit is closed with a little slide or door; and the numbers of all the houses are painted in black on oval pieces of white porcelain. And every public notice is printed in both French and English.

Almost all the store doors have upon them the hugest and most wonderful fastenings ever produced—a massive brass thumb-latch and handle high up, and a massive iron latch, dropping into a massive iron catch, low down, connected with the thumb-latch above by a chain or hinged rod, also massive. The people burn a great deal of wood and very little coal, and the stoves are fearfully and wonderfully made, being mostly all stovepipe and drum, built in fantastic and castellated shapes.

In the streets, and especially in those leading from the country, fat little ponies race around, harnessed to funny little two-wheeled carts, like miniature English dogcarts, in which, protected from the public, and from tumbling out, by a railing like a little picket-fence, as if every man had brought his front door-yard away with him on wheels, the likewise fat man and his *femme* are joltily seated, smiling from the dooryard on the passers-by. And if the horses only went a little faster, and the driver had a long-lashed whip which he cracked from right to left, crying "He! he!", we would imagine ourselves in Marseilles again. To heighten this imagination comes a postman, very like a *gendarme*, dressed in blue trimmed with red, and buried under a huge white canvas helmet, as if he were wandering in the wilds and heats of India, hunting tigers. And the number of these helmets worn is truly surprising, the newly-arrived Englishman

especially looming up in one, as if he were a species of exceedingly long-legged turtle carrying his own comparatively diminutive shell.

But the funniest thing of all is the Canadian adaptation of the American bell-punch system. Methought, when we jumped aboard a car, Now we are out of the land where

“ The conductor, when he receives a fare,
Must punch in the presence of the passenaire
A buff trip-slip for a six-cent fare,
A blue trip slip for a three-cent fare,
All in the presence of the passenaire.”

But no. Tyrannical Monopoly still reigns. The conductor—a very little, pale man—appeared in front of us with a huge tin box, having a glass front in it, hanging by a strap to his neck (as if he were fairly harnessed to incorruptible honesty), which he grasped by a handle, and thrust under our noses for the fare, which we dropped through the hole in the top, and had the satisfaction of seeing reposing among its brethren at the bottom of its jangling sarcophagus.

Beside the Cathedral of Notre Dame is the old seminary, or priests' house, separated from the street by an old blackened stone wall, and over the curiously carved gateway there is an ancient clock, beneath which is inscribed, “*Temps Moyens* ;” and from many a soul whose eyes, through the passing years, have looked upon the moving hands and immovable words, Time has indeed fled away, to leave it with ever-present Eternity.

Near the river stands the old church of Bonsecour, within which are columns whose capitals are curiously carved and painted and gilded; and over the altar is a huge erection (I am not sufficiently Apostolic to know the name) consisting of four enormous beams, curved like the line of beauty, and reaching from the four corners of the chancel up to a central point above the altar, where they blossom out in a crown, the whole being gilt from top to bottom.

Hidden away in a crooked, narrow back street, also down by the river, and surrounded by warehouses and wharves, is the little old French church of Notre Dame de la Garde, built during the close of the seventeenth century, and said to be the most venerable

of all. Its low sharp roof and little pointed spire, surmounted by a curious old weather-cock, are both covered with small plates of tin, once bright, but now sadly stained and rusted. And in the weather-worn stone front, over the main door, is carved an inscription in quaint old French which, translated, runs thus: "Let the passer-by, whose heart bows to the love of the good God, enter here, and resting awhile, kneeling, repeat an Ave Maria."

In the Court, into which we look for a moment, the lawyers' seats, consisting of little cloth-covered desks with immovable chairs behind them, face the Judge's bench in semicircular and ascending rows. An *avocat*, dressed in his long black silk gown and white tie, and looking for all the world like an Episcopal clergyman when in the pulpit, is addressing the Court, who, also in gowns and ties, but both more voluminous, sit upon their bench, with the *prothonotaire*, likewise begowned and betied, at his desk before and below them.

And so we wander over the town. Call upon the Consul General of the United States, in whom I agreeably discover an old schoolmate and chum, and pass by an exceedingly small shoeshop, upon whose exceedingly large sign the legend "Patronized by H. R. H. the Princess Louise," proclaims flunkeyism to this western world.

Reaching again the Windsor, we sit at the window, and look out over the unfinished and slowly-rising walls of the huge new cathedral. And the sun goes down in a glory of red and gold; and on his far-reaching beams, and on the wings of the night, our thoughts and hearts fly away to that goal toward which all travelers' thoughts are ever hastening—home.

CHAPTER XV.

STEAMER TRAVEL ON THE ST. LAWRENCE.

BEHOLD us, parted from that satisfaction to our souls, the Windsor, and therefore marked by melancholy for her own, on our cabby, rattling way to the wharf, *en route* for Sorel, a typical French-Canadian town, we have been told, situated some forty-five miles down the St. Lawrence, at the confluence of it and the Richelieu, and where some people whom we know are spending the summer. Arrived at the wharf we purchase our tickets and state-rooms in English, from an agent who would much rather sell them in French; see our trunks shot from the wharf, along a hazardous plank, into a hole in the steamer's side and the baggage-room; pass through a chattering, leave-taking crowd; step along the gang-plank; ascend to the state-room deck; show our tickets to an official in uniform, who takes the proper keys from a huge board at his back, bristling with hooks and musical with pendant keys, and gives them to us; hunt up a scarce steward, to guide us to our particular kennels; leave our traps, and saunter out on deck.

What a little world is gathered on a steamer's wharf! All the notes of the heart, all the notes of the mind, all the notes of the pocket are sounded, the vibrations of each particular chord showing in the face and actions of each human instrument. What partings—the sorrowing staying and the glad going; the sorrowing both staying and going; the glad both staying and going; and—let us hope that these are few—the glad staying while the sorrowful depart. Love, hate, jealousy, meanness, generosity, selfishness, overbearing pride or brutality, and shrinking humility or cowardice, all jostle each other, at which one gazes, and upon which he moralizes, at times thanking his luckystars that he is not burdened with some particular femininity, and anon wishing that that kiss and that embrace and those falling tears had been for him, a kiss and embrace and tears that perhaps bring a curious choking in his throat and a dimness to his eyes, as a parting long gone by rises from the grave of a buried memory.

The great steamer slowly sweeps out from its idle fellows; the cordage and spars along the river front blend into a little tangled, waterside forest; the streets melt into the houses; the houses shrink into a broken mass; the spires rise up from a misty hill; the great dome of the market is caught and crimsoned by the setting sun; the Mont Real fades into the sky, and the steamer rushes, throbbing and panting, over the swift tide of the great river, toward the sea.

What an essentially gregarious animal the Frenchman is, hating solitude, loving company, jolly, communicative, voluble, and making himself thoroughly at home everywhere! How radically and totally different from an Englishman! And what an admirable mixture of both is the American, having the stability of the one without his churlishness, and the vivacity of the other without his fickleness. (It may, perhaps, be surmised that the writer is an American.)

As the sun goes down, and the little lighthouses along the river's banks flash into life from field and wood and precipitous bluff and low-lying shore, and the cabin becomes brilliant, the many-tongued and motley crowd gathers around the long tables where photographs and Indian goods—moccasins, pipes, bead- and wampum-work, bows and arrows, pin-cushions, miniature snow-shoes and canoes, and a hundred other things—are for sale, looking and handling and asking much, but buying little. Gathers also, and particularly, around the piano, at which a lively young woman is playing waltzes, which so inspire the younger portion of the company, that it embraces each other, and whirls around in the limited space, tumbling over the sofas and chairs, bumping against the piano and the mast and the elders, and making sore corns sorer, and well toes vociferous in complaint.

Now a man with well-oiled, long, black hair, and waxed mustache and imperial, a local celebrity evidently, comes forward amid applause, and taking the place of the lively young lady, who leans easily on the piano with the crowd, rattles off sprightly French songs, which convulse the listeners who are French, and make the listeners who don't understand mad with envy of those who do.

Then a deep contralto takes the stool, but is not a particular success; whereupon a gesticulating declaimer has the floor,

and we leave him and his howls, and Uncle Robert and I go below.

Here, at the foot of the companion-way, on the main deck, is a little crowd of men smoking (mostly pipes), and reading; and, just beyond, the well-patronized bar, at which we partake of a little usquebaugh and get manilla cheroots. At one side of this improvised smoking-room is the women's berth-cabin, while at the other, forward, is an iron grating, extending from deck to ceiling, separating the second-class passengers from the first. Passing in through a little wicket-door, guarded by an official, we walk forward among these poor, seated and lying on benches and boxes and bales of merchandise and huge crates of cabbages, some awake, and talking and laughing and smoking, and others, in every uncomfortable attitude consistent with continued life, sleeping and snoring.

Picking our way still further forward, and passing the engine-room, down in which the mighty mechanism is crashing and tearing, as if mad that its giant arm can never strike and shiver the near and fragile wood, we come to the sheep pens at the bow, whose bleating, baaing occupants, their number augmented at almost every landing, are journeying toward death. As indeed are we all; and we think of it, for the most part, as little as do these sheep; but follow our leader, rush into the shambles, die, and are eaten of worms; in which particular we are of less use than the sheep, except that, perhaps, worms must be sustained.

A companionable old fellow is Uncle Robert; and now, freed for the moment from that shackle, his wife, disports his tongue in amusing reminiscence of his younger life, as, having returned aft, we sit in the smoking-room, and sip usquebaugh, and slowly exhale fragrant clouds from our manillas. But soon the shackle gapes for the locking; for a steward comes down, searches for and finds the doomed, and informs him that madame awaits him on high. So on high we go; the shackle is locked, and I search out Jemima, with whom I hunt up the Professor, finding him asleep in an easy-chair, with his head sunk on his breast, while his four Picketeds are sprawlingly ranging in the thicket of his beard, to the intense amusement of a little crowd that has gathered to wonder and admire. We maliciously leave him in snoring unconsciousness, and go out on deck.

A little collection of lights comes into view. We are nearing a landing; and the steamer's whistle calls other and hastily moving lights down to the river's edge. A dim wharf appears; we swing up alongside; the hawser is shouted over the pile; the gang-planks slam out, and a little merchandise and more people get off and a few people get on, and we think we are off. But no. Do you see that pyramid of cheeses, and that pile of blue-berry boxes? They must all come aboard, and they do. Four boxes of cheese, or three boxes of berries, are slapped on a hand-truck, and it and its motive man dash down the gang-plank and into the cavernous side of the steamer, a laden stream of trucks and men going down, while an unladen stream goes up, the dim light from a large fixed lantern making the men look like gnomes hard at work; and in about an hour we count 352 boxes of cheese and 98 of berries stowed away in our floating warehouse. Calculating those cheeses at, say, \$7 each, we have taken aboard \$2,464 worth of dyspepsia; likewise 98 boxes of cholera morbus, value unknown.

We meet a communicative man, who informs us that the Grand Trunk is the worst and the Canada Southern the best road in Canada; and that on a special train run for Vanderbilt and party, consisting of an engine, tender and one car, they made, on the Canada Southern, 111 consecutive miles in 109 consecutive minutes (!?).

The whistle trying to blow its own head off; a commotion on all decks; two lighthouse lights, like the eyes of a monster of black vacuity, for nothing but eyes, and the long trails of baleful light they throw at us over the else invisible blacker water, can be seen; another and larger wharf; buildings, which seem as if composed of but one dimly illuminated wall, for but one wall appears; a shadowy crowd, fantastic in the dull red light which catches a head, an arm, a shoulder and a face here and there. The hawser-lines spring out like lithe serpents, and fall over the heads and shoulders of men who immediately become hauling machines; the great hawsers follow to the posts, from which the crowd surges away to let them drop; the steamer bumps and grates against the piles; the gang-plank shoots out like a great flat tongue, and lands at the foot of an ascending way like a chisel-gouge in the side of the wharf, and we are at Sorel, the first town of importance east of Montreal.

We rush into the cabin and arouse our party, who are half asleep and awake wholly cross, and a scrimmage for traps ensues. Aunt Hepzibah takes charge of Uncle Robert, the Professor of Aunt Eunice, Bolus of traps and Victorine with more traps, and I of my wife and our two traveling-bags.

We enter the out-going crowd, which is squeezed tighter and tighter till it passes the gangway, when, rebounding, it almost topples off either side of the gang-plank into the water; walk up the steep gangway, down which trucks and men and merchandise are already beginning to charge; have "Hotel Piché!" yelled into our ears, and our bags grabbed and immediately carried off, concerning which we fatalistically think that if we see them again we shall see them again, and if we don't we won't, and so saunter into the crowd which covers the wharf, which is on a level with the upper deck of the steamer, and talks with its acquaintances who stand leaning over the deck railing.

We wonder why so few people have gone aboard, or whether some public and important personage is traveling, and so ask a neighbor, who immediately and volubly explains in remarkable English that the present concourse is not an unusual, but a daily occurrence, (or rather a nightly, for it is by this time after eleven o'clock), it being the principal recreation of the townspeople. So we wait until a great flock of sheep are persuaded into the steamer by the edifying example of their leader, who is dragged by the ears and tail before their noses, and whom they unhesitatingly follow—how much wiser than sheep are men!—and then tramp over a board sidewalk to the Hotel Piché, whither our elders have preceded us, at the sight of which and the room to which we are assigned, our hearts go down into our shoes with emphasis, as if determined to remain there permanently.

CHAPTER XVI.

A TYPICAL FRENCH-CANADIAN TOWN, AND A CHILD'S STORY.

WHERE the river Richelieu, the outlet of Lake Champlain, joins the St. Lawrence, lies, upon its eastern shore, the town of Sorel, covering the little cape or point at the junction of the two rivers, but spreading more along and up the sheltered bank of the Richelieu, rather than by the more turbulent and wind-swept waters of the larger stream, which, flowing north and east, and broadening, encircles the many islands of an inland archipelago, and spreads out into the Lake St. Peter.

Back from the town, to the south and east, stretches a level plain, whose sandy soil is here covered by grassy fields and little patches of corn and grain, while beyond, the dark-green pines accent the horizon line and spread away on either hand to hazy blue.

It is market day; and before our hotel window lies the market and the market-place, while the bustle that marks the day pervades the town, enlivens the sandy, sleepy streets, invades the stores, fills up the bar-rooms and hotels, and awakens every inhabitant, from the judge on the bench to the house-wife in the kitchen—servants are few and far between. In the middle of the market-place—a greatly widened main street—stands the market-house, from between whose ancient bricks the more ephemeral mortar is slowly falling away. In it the townspeople stand and push and crowd, eagerly picking up choice bits here, haggling over doubtful produce there, talking, calling, laughing and shouting in every tone possible to the human and especially the feminine voice. All around the market-house runs a broad wooden sidewalk, backed up against which are the farmers' wagons (from which the motive beasts have been unharnessed) forming, with their propped-up shafts, a bristling hedge. At these wagons stand the respective owners, crying their varied produce, their raised voices sinking every now and then to anxious colloquy with a prospective buyer.

At one end, where the sidewalk has broadened into a platform over which is a protecting roof, are those who, in their worldly state not boasting of a horse and wagon, have trudged over the

sandy, sun-baked miles, bringing in little packages of vegetables, baskets of eggs, rolls of butter, pots of honey, rope-like coils of native smoking tobacco (which is very good), and odds and ends and little messes and driblets of farm produce of all descriptions, by which they sit or stand, and whose merits they extol.

What a motley crowd! What a jabber of bad French and worse English! What high-pitched, raspy voices! What little meannesses and petty cheatings—and in these, methinks, a farmer takes the lead. The faces of the women—the *habitans*—burned to a clayey brown, peer out from under their black straw hats, whose large, black ribbon-strings are tied under their chins. Over their shoulders and folded across their breasts are little fringed shawls, while from their ample waists, and over their ampler hips, hang short, dark-colored skirts, gathered in heavy folds at the waist-band. “French peasants come across the sea!” cry we, and are back again in La Belle France.

But now the market-day draws to a close. The little Canadian ponies are harnessed, and they and their appurtenant wagons and urging owners trot and jolt and sway away toward their country homes. And what wagons! Mostly two poles, for shafts, fastened to an axle, upon which is nailed a rough box, across which is a board for a seat, and the equipage is complete!

As straws show which way the wind blows, so do little customs the nature of a country. For instance, there is no breeching to the farmers' ponies' harness. Why? The country being a dead level, there are no hills and so no holding back to do. The country roads being sparsely traveled, there are few meetings and so few sudden stoppages. Hence no need of breeching. *Vice versa*, no breeching, hence a level, sparsely-settled country.

Time was, some fifty years ago, when Sorel was gayer than it is now; when the rotting barracks down by the wharf were new, and filled with the red-coated defenders (and holders) of the colony; when the old, round, stone powder-house contained munitions of war (and assurance of domestic peace); when within the now duck-frequented, grassy yard, stiff officers drilled stiffer soldiers; when the town and surrounding country, a part of the Ordnance Lands, were governed by the Commander-in-chief; when the Government House, a little way up the banks of the Richelieu, was majestic in summer with the presence of said

Commander-in-chief and Governor of the Province, and gay with young and old and sometimes noble officers of Her Majesty's army, to whose receptions came the belles of the town, and who sometimes carried away across the sea the hearts—and, alas, sometimes also the honor—of those pretty village belles, but rarely the belles themselves; and when among the whispering pines crowning the river bank and surrounding and ever shading the old mansion, gay groups walked and chatted and laughed, while the low-ceiled rooms were bright with life and the wide-spreading wings sheltered a goodly company.

But now but the bat and the swallow live and build in and around the deserted house; only rats and mice trip over the uneven floors of the damp and musty rooms; but the flooding rain sweeps down the vanishing walks between the ragged, ancient box, and the squirrels are the only chatterers underneath the pines.

The barracks, grey and weather-worn, with hilly, hollow roof-trees and bulging walls, stand rotting in the barrack yard, a resort for houseless, homeless wanderers; while the half-ruined powder-house, like the ancient watch-towers along the southern coast of Spain, stands boldly out upon the grassy point, mute witness of the almost departed power of the Old World in the New.

The Aas and the Bees and the Cees, our friends, have called upon us during the day, and in the cool of the evening we return the call *en masse*. For know, oh reader, that the mercury has a chance in Canada for the most remarkable activity. It can disport itself all the way from forty-five degrees below to one hundred above zero; and during the day in question it has been smilingly simmering at ninety in umbrageous depths. We find our friends ensconced for the summer in a house which has evidently been picked up in France and transplanted whole to its present resting-place, its stolidity of absolute squareness softened by the high-pitched, shingled roof, sloping on all four sides from the central point in gently curving lines to the eaves, which project, almost level, far beyond the red brick walls.

The conversation becomes reminiscent and comparative.

Soon some, indigenous, call—the Dés and Efff's—to whom we are introduced, and with two of whom—Monsieur and Madame

Dé—Jemima and I presently wander off upon a moonlit tour of inspection, passing through the little square upon which our friends' house faces, as do most of the houses of the local aristocracy, where amid the rampant grass an ancient, ponderous dog of war lies grimly helpless, its silent throat blackened by but the peaceful rains.

On the other side of the square is the *Palais de Justice*, of red brick, and common-place, but making up what it lacks in architectural dignity by the title of its clerk, which Monsieur Dé recites with some unction—*Greffier de la Cour de Circuit; Greffier de la Couronne, et Greffier de la Paix* (!).

A little way up the street is an old wooden house standing close to the sidewalk, where, sitting at his office door, we come upon an aged gentleman, a notary public, to whom we are introduced. And being invited by him into the office, we learn that his great-grandfather, grandfather, uncle and father had officiated here as notaries before him! and see, upon the dusty shelves, great piles of dusty, musty papers—and the persons whom they concern are dustier and mustier, for they were long ago dust and mold.

On the way to our hotel, after we had returned to our friends' house and our call was ended, some fire-flies carried past their intermittent lamps.

"Oh," said Uncle Robert, addressing our party generally, "if bed-bu——"

"*Cimex lectularius*," interrupted the Professor.

"If cimexes," resumed Uncle Robert, with an apologetic intonation, "were only like fire-flies, how easy to catch them!"

"Robert!" exclaimed Aunt Hepzibah with some asperity, "how can you talk of those nasty things!"

"Ah, Madam," said the Professor eagerly, "have you ever considered the intelligence of those insects?"

"No, I haven't," answered Aunt Hepzibah, "and I don't want to—they're too horrid!"

"But reflect upon their wonderful mathematical accuracy," went on the Professor unabashed. "From some convenient crevice in the wall they emerge, and crawling to that portion of the ceiling directly over the sleeper—what judgment of distance!—they drop——"

"What a charming evening it is!" hastily exclaimed Jemima as we emerged into a patch of moonlight, looking the Professor full in the face.

Uncle Robert confided to me the next morning that it was longer before he was allowed to fall asleep that night than if he had reposed upon a bedful of cimexes.

The next day was Sunday, and we all went with our American friends to the English Church, the only Protestant church in the town, whose low, square, battlemented tower and Gothic roof made it look as if it might have been dropped down from a rural English parish; where, sitting in the high-backed, rigidly-uncomfortable pews, we responded somewhat faintly to the prayers for Her Majesty the Queen and their sundry Highnesses the Royal Family, wondering meantime how many prayers would be necessary to carry H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to Heaven.

In the drowsy afternoon I walked out to the skirt of the pine forest beyond the town, telling Jemima where I was going and gaining her promise to follow shortly; and there, stretched on the soft, fragrant carpet of brown needles, with my head resting against the jutting root of a huge pine, wandered unknowingly from waking thought to dreams. And I dreamed that I was by the old English Church; when who should come out but a bride and groom, followed by their attendant men and maids, pair by pair. But in place of the roses and cream of the maidens' cheeks and the darker hue of the men's, all faces and hands and necks were of burnished gold, which glistened and gleamed in the sun, and over the graceful shoulders of the women hung draperies of deep, dead gold, while their skirts were of deep, dead black, and the clothes of the men were of gold above and black below. The organ sounded from the open door the stirring notes of the wedding march—but the tones lost their charm; became harsh and cracked, and I awoke to the fact that an inquisitive squirrel was chatteringly proceeding to investigate my nose. Frightened by an involuntary movement, he fled away up the tree; but emboldened by my continued quiet and, doubtless, gentle looks, he came gradually back in a succession of chattering fits and spitting starts, till he was again close to my face, when I incontinently sneezed, whereat he rushed up the tree in a perfect rain of bark

and whirlwind of spits and chatters, and was lost to the eye and at length to the ear.

From marriage to death is an easy transition, for one is always the cause of the other; and I remembered having seen that morning a young father walking down the street, clad in black, around his hat a broad, white band which hung down his back, and carrying under his arm a little white coffin, in which, we were told, was his first and only child; and his brother walked behind him, the only mourner. Poor fellow—poor as to hope and poor as to pocket—he was carrying his baby to be cheaply laid by the priest in consecrated ground.

Soon another kind of chattering was heard, and Jemima appeared, surrounded by a little crowd of small Aas and Bees and Cees, and looking like a young and diminutive shepherdess leading a flock of highly-colored lambs. They came to my tree, and sitting down, the youngsters vociferously demanded of her a story. I backed up the request, with the proviso that I might smoke meanwhile.

“You won’t laugh?” she said to me, a little nervously.

“Never!” I replied. “Is it to be very funny?”

“No, not that,” she said. “But I don’t like to tell stories before grown-up people, for——”

“Even your husband?”

“Yes, even my husband; for—well, I will!”—looking at me half pathetically. “Now, children,” turning to the attentive, up-turned faces—for Jemima always fascinates children, as she does some people of a larger growth—“be good and quiet, and when I’m all through you can ask as many questions as you like.” And then she told them this story, which she called

THE JOURNEY HOME.

Harry went to church one summer’s morning with his father and mother; and the white-haired old minister, whose kindly old eyes seemed to him to look, every now and then, right into his, as much as to say, “Are you paying attention, and do you understand?” took these words for his text: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Although the minister spoke as plainly, no doubt, as he could, yet, as he was speaking to the grown-up people, Harry couldn't exactly understand what he meant; and he felt very much like saying, when the kindly old eyes looked at him, "Yes, I am paying attention, but I don't understand."

And so when, after supper, they were all sitting on the piazza, in the gloaming—that time of all the twenty-four hours when all the good and gentle thoughts there are in the world come out from their hiding-places and enter, or try to enter, into the minds and hearts and so into the lives of men—Harry asked his father if he wouldn't tell him what that text meant. So his father, in plain and gentle words, told of the meaning; and they all talked on, in the gathering night, of Bible lands; of Eastern men; of the great Desert and its stony wonders, till regretful bed-time came for the younger ones, and Harry went to bed.

Harry suddenly awoke—or dreamed he awoke. As he raised himself on his elbow, behold, his room was filled with the bright sunlight, streaming in from one of the windows, and the floor was covered with shining, reddish-grey sand, which poured in from over the window-sill, and which, as he looked out, seemed to stretch away, a great level plain, as far as his eyes could reach. And through the window, the head and long neck of a camel were poked into the room, and its large, dreamy eyes looked around in a slow and solemn fashion, as wondering what sort of a place that was. And Harry, in his turn, rather wondered what that camel could be doing out there by the window, and why it was that the earth had risen to the level of his room, or if his room had sunk to the level of the earth; and why, instead of the green grass, and the trees with their long, waving branches and tremulous leaves, and the flower-beds bright with purple and scarlet and metallic hues, the sand, like the sand on the grey beach, where the waves used to come tumbling over each other as if eager to play with him, stretched away and away toward the purple sky and some strange, sharp-pointed mounds, like little hills, that stood up black against the rising sun.

But he didn't wonder much nor long; for nothing in dreams seems very strange or out of place, and the queerest things seem quite natural and as they should be. And then, as the camel began looking at him quite steadily, and seemed to smile "good

morning," he jumped out of bed upon the carpet of sand that spread over the floor and that felt so soft and warm to his feet, and going up to the camel, who put its head down in the most friendly way, he stroked its soft nose, and patted it between the eyes, and, wondering whether the length of its neck was not very inconvenient, said "good morning."

The camel didn't answer, although it looked as if it wanted to; but, instead, a boy of about his own age, Harry thought, and height, came to the window and said some of the queerest words he had ever heard, but of which, in the strangest way, he seemed to know the meaning at once—that they meant "good morning." So he said "good morning" and asked the boy to come in, with the pleasantest smile he could command.

How curiously the boy was dressed! His pantaloons were blue, and looked like two bags, one on each leg, with the mouth of the bag tied tight just below the knee. His pretty, short jacket was of scarlet cloth, embroidered with gold thread and gold lace, with a white cross on the breast. Under the half-open jacket was a white shirt; and on his head was a soft white cloth, wound round and round to make a hat, which Harry remembered his father had said was called a turban; and on his feet were yellow morocco slippers, with long pointed toes, turned up a little. But the best of all was his face, so jolly and kind and manly; and his eyes seemed two dancing suns, so active and bright were they.

Harry and he stood looking at each other a moment, and then Harry asked him his name.

"Abdallah," said he; and Harry seemed to know at once that it meant "The Servant of God."

"Won't you hurry and dress yourself, Harry," said Abdallah, still speaking his strange language, which Harry seemed, as before, to understand without any trouble. "I want you to go with me."

"Where?" said Harry, thinking how strange it was that Abdallah should have known his name, but not thinking it at all strange that he should have been there, so inconsistent are we sometimes—in dreams.

"To where our dear Lord lives," replied Abdallah. And as he said "our dear Lord," such a happy smile broke over his

beautiful face, and such happy tears shone in his eyes, that it seemed as if his dear Lord must be right there by him.

“And where does your dear Lord live,” asked Harry, “and will he be my dear Lord too?”

“Indeed he will,” said Abdallah—and he put his arm around Harry’s shoulder in such a loving way—“for He sent me to you; and He lives away over there beyond the sunrise. But hurry up, Harry, for the others are waiting for you.”

“What others?” said Harry.

“Get dressed and come out, and you’ll see,” replied Abdallah.

So Harry washed himself, and put on his clothes as fast as ever he could; and then Abdallah fastened a white cross, just like his own, on his breast, and they walked toward the window, out of which the camel had taken his long neck and was standing, a silhouette against the crimson sky. (Ask your mothers what that long word “silhouette” means.)

Harry and Abdallah stepped out, and what a wonderful sight Harry saw! Away on his right hand, and away on his left, and away before him to the sunrising, the great plain of sand spread, as level as the sea, but, like the great swell of the sea, rising in low, far-spreading mounds, and sinking in wide and shallow valleys; and this, Abdallah said, was called the Desert. Above his head was a sky without a cloud, in which the waning moon was sinking toward the west, while in the east the sun was rising like a great burning ball, which seemed to set the heavens on fire, so high and wide shot its red and gold light, against which the level line of the Desert lay cold and black, tinted here and there on the tops of the rising mounds with the crimson and gold of the sunrise, which seemed to break, like waves of fire, against the further side of those strange, sharp-pointed hills, shining and glowing over their edges. And those hills, Abdallah said, were the Pyramids, which long, long ago, the kings who lived in those days had built for their tombs, so that they might never be forgotten.

But, what was stranger than the Desert and the Pyramids, was a great crowd of children—boys and girls, little and big—a short way off on the sand; and toward these Harry and Abdallah went.

As soon as the children saw them they all ran to them; and then Harry saw that Abdallah and he were taller and stronger

than any of the rest. They were dressed in many kinds of costume: some like his; a few like Abdallah's; some whose clothes were rough and ill-made; some whose clothes were ragged and patched; two or three in strange garments of skins; and several little darkies ran around quite naked, their little bodies seeming to be fitly clothed with their dark, shining skins. But each child wore a white cross on its breast.

Although each child spoke its own language, the language of its country, yet every one was understood by all the rest. For with them, as it had been with Harry, the strange words seemed to carry their meaning with them, as if some one was whispering it in the ear. But whenever any one said a cross word, or an unkind word, or a bad word—for sometimes they did—no one seemed to understand, and the word was lost in the air and the sand.

And now, all the children being gathered around, Abdallah said, "Come, let us go toward Home, to our Father's House, where our dear Lord is waiting for us."

Then he and Harry, whom he seemed to have chosen for his lieutenant, put the children in order, the larger by the smaller and the stronger by the weaker, that all might help each other on the way. And in each child's hand they placed a staff, and over each child's shoulder they slung a flask of clear, cold water. And in the rear of the troop stood four solemn-looking camels, the first bearing the water in two huge skins, the second food, the third staves of all sizes, and the fourth clothes of all kinds.

So when all were ready, Abdallah placed himself at the head of the strange little company, and Harry took his place at his side, and just behind them was a strong, tall boy, with such a kind, strong, helpful face, carrying a white banner, and on this banner was written in letters of gold, LOVE.

"Forward!" said Abdallah. And every child, with the red light of the sun shining in its eyes; with the red light of the sun tinging the spotless white of the cross on its breast—as the red blood stained the white robes of their dear Lord as, having conquered Death, he showed his wounded, bleeding side to his Father and their Father, as ransom for their souls—every child stepped out, and the march Homeward was begun.

But soon a wonderful thing happened. As the sun rose higher and higher, and his rays fell hot on the little heads and tender

bodies, the white Banner of Love began to spread and spread its folds, stretching further and further, broader and broader, till, turned as if by an invisible hand, it spread over the whole troop, a white, waving tent, under which the breeze blew cool and strong, and in whose protecting shadow life came back to the weary little feet, and hope to the fainting little hearts, and eyes were brightened and heads were lifted and steps were quickened on the march toward Home. But, more wonderful still, the bearer of this Banner seemed never to feel the increasing weight, seemed never to tire under the increasing load, seemed never to yield to the increasing strain of the waving folds, but as his burden became greater, his strength seemed to grow—for the burden he bore was Love.

And so, marching on, sometimes singing all together, a chorus of happy childish voices (and the strains seemed to be caught up by other voices, high up toward the blue dome of the sky); stopping when Abdallah thought it best, for rest and for food, the day wore away; and as the coolness of night came on, the folds of the wonderful Banner drew themselves in, and the stars peeped out one by one to look at these children going Home.

Then, as the darkness deepened, and the tired little eyelids began to droop over the sleepy eyes, Abdallah called them all around him; and kneeling with them on the soft sand, prayed to his Lord and their Lord to watch over them during the coming night, and to wake them up to the light of the sun; or, if it was His will, to wake such of them as He would to the light of His smile in their Home.

And, as they nestled them down for the night—the younger and the timid creeping into the arms of the older and braver—the great Banner of Love unfolded its strong wings again, and spread close over the sleeping little ones; and from its under side came a faint, soft light, that robbed the night of its terrors, and seemed the light from the eyes of a mother, brooding over her sleeping ones.

With the morning they found that their Lord had willed to take one little one the shorter journey Home; for in her place, where she had lain, were but her staff and her flask and her clothes; for she would not need them in her Home; but, Abdallah said, would be clothed in her own innocence and lovely purity, and would eat delicious fruits from the Trees of Life, and drink cool, sweet water from the Springs of Love, in that Beautiful Land

where she had gone. And as some, whose playmate she had been, wept because they could not see her till they too should reach Home, Abdallah bid them all rejoice, because they now had a friend and playmate waiting to welcome them when they did reach Home, and because her little feet were spared the harder way. So they took her clothes and her staff and her flask, and laid them tenderly (because they had belonged to her) in the sand; and Abdallah, with them all, knelt down, and thanked the dear Lord that He had been pleased to take their little sister by that shorter way. Then they all felt comforted, and, slinging on their flasks and grasping their staves, set out again on their march toward Home.

It was found this day that each child had grown since the day before, and the good in some and the bad in others was stronger, according as each had used the hours of the preceding day. And some were disheartened, and cried out that they were tired, and sat down, and would go no further; and these Abdallah and Harry persuaded to drink from their flasks, and to come again under the shadow of the Banner; which when they had done, they were cheered again, and helped to hearten others.

But others were rebellious, and wandered away from the shadow of the Banner, and lost their flasks, and thought they saw other and better water in far-away streams, and other and better food on far-away trees, and, insisting on going to those deceitful streams and trees, to which they could never come, fell down and died from thirst and heat; and the sands drifted over them, and they were lost to sight and forgotten: and yet not wholly forgotten, for their companions mourned over them and their self-brought fate.

Sometimes one of these rebellious ones, having seen his mistake, when the false rivers and trees had vanished and left in their place but the grey sand and blinding heat, would call out for help from far away; and then Harry or Abdallah or some of the stronger ones, hearing that cry (for no matter how far the repentant wanderer had strayed—no matter how many miles and miles separated him from the Banner—those under its shadow always heard his faintest cry), one of them would run to him, and give him drink from his own flask, and help him back again to the shadow of the Banner.

One day—how quickly days pass in dreams—one day toward noon, when the sun was hot overhead, and the sands, away from the cooling shade of the Banner, seemed like coals of fire under the feet, Harry heard a faint cry for help from far in the rear. He was very tired, for he had been carrying the little ones, cheering the disheartened, persuading back the wanderers, and helping everywhere; but hearing that cry, he forgot his weariness, and leaving the shadow, started back. Fainter and fainter came the cry. The sun beat down, the sand was hot, and his throat was parched with thirst. He took a sip from his flask—only a little though, so as to leave enough for the exhausted one—and hurried on. At last, away in the distance, he saw a child whom he had rescued many times; who would wander again and again, and who had brought him many a weary, anxious hour. But he did not hesitate, but ran on as fast as he could.

At last he came to him, lying exhausted on the sand, nearly dead, but stretching out his trembling arms toward the false rivers and phantom trees which he thought he saw, and calling to the rivers to come and give him their water, and to the trees to come and give him their fruit and shade—but there was nothing but the sand and the heat.

Harry stooped over the poor little wanderer, who though so misguided was yet so pitiful, and holding his flask to his lips, told him to drink. He grasped the flask and tried to swallow—but Death had his terrible hand on his little throat, and he could not. But, rising suddenly from the ground, he stretched out his arms, and calling to the shining rivers and the beautiful trees, the light from those cruel rivers went out from his eyes, and a shade darker than that of those lying trees crept over his brow, and he fell in the sand, dead.

Harry knelt beside him, and lifted his head to see if perhaps there might be some life left. The eager look was still on his face and in his wide open eyes, but the warmth of life was going, and the stony hand of Death was turning him to stone, and he was but a part of the earth from which he had come.

So Harry laid him gently down, and closed his pretty, sightless eyes, and dug a little grave in the sand with his hands, and laid him in it, and covered him up, and started to go back. But his flask! Where was his flask? Oh now, dear Lord, have pity

upon him! In the sand, the last drop gone, lay his empty flask; and without the water, where was his life? Lost!

He fell on his knees and prayed. Prayed his dear Lord to give him strength for the journey back: prayed his dear Lord to help him bear this terrible thirst; but also prayed that, if he had not the strength for this longer way, his dear Lord would take him, by that shorter way, Home.

He looked for the company of children, but they were nowhere to be seen. On every side lay the wide, grey plain, quivering with the heat that rose from the burning sand, while in a great circle the sky surrounded him, and he stood alone, as if he were the only being on the earth. But calling on his dear Lord for courage and strength, he commenced the journey back.

Oh weary way; oh blinding heat; oh pitiless sky and more pitiless sun that beats its rays down on his poor, bursting head! How deep the sand seems to grow. The earth seems to heave like the waves of a great fiery sea. He falls. He rises and struggles on. His mouth is parched and he cannot cry for help. He falls again. He cannot rise. And now he thinks he sees his father and his mother passing by, but they cannot hear him. "Father! Mother!"—but they cannot hear. But One does hear. From the bright sky—bright now with a soft, white light that shines around the descending Man—comes He of the loving face, He of the pitying heart, He to whose gentle arms little children came and were blessed. "It is, oh, it is my dear Lord! Oh, don't leave me—take me!"

Over him bent a beautiful face. Into his eyes looked such loving eyes, from which the tears were falling, one by one, for the suffering of this His child. In strong arms he was lifted up, and up, and up—and he knew he was going that shorter way Home.

And as he lay on his dear Lord's breast, in his ears were whispered these words: "Inasmuch as thou hast done it for one of the least of these, thou hast done it for Me."

And Harry awoke—for it was all a dream.

I could not speak; but, while the wondering little ones looked on, I took my wife in my arms, and thanked God in my heart that such a soul belonged to me.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PICNIC, AND STORIES AROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

A DAY or two after, when the bi-daily walk to the post-office had ceased to be exciting, and the tri-daily recurrence of meals had become something to look forward to, we received an invitation from M. and Mme. Dé to a yachting party. To say that our several spirits rose upon the perusal of the little *billet*, would be to but feebly express the hilarity it occasioned. The vote for acceptance was unanimous, which acceptance Aunt Hepzibah inscribed in her very best French, and then Jemima rushed off to ascertain whether the Aas and Bees and Cees were invited (as we were sure they were), and whether they were going: and she found they were. So the next day saw us all assembled at the wharf on the Richelieu, looking down upon the dainty steam-yacht of our host. A laughing and chattering scramble aboard; a settling of congenialities (the Professor by Aunt Eunice) and we left Sorel, and, steaming down the Richelieu, floated out upon the broad bosom of the St. Lawrence. We passed large islands whereon sheep and cows were grazing; wound in and out of narrow channels, where the banks were heavily wooded to the water's edge, and reached the islet which was our destination, (one among the many which make up the archipelago at the head of Lake St. Peter), on which towers a wooden lighthouse which, in spring, emerges with the surrounding trees from the rushing brown water which covers all these lesser islands with its flood.

And then Bolus (whom we had asked to be allowed to bring, with Victorine) showed his administrative capacity; for he imperiously assumed the position (which did not belong to him) of autocrat of all the servitors; appointed Victorine his prime mistress, and brought spread order out of packed chaos, to the end of a delicious luncheon upon a snowy cloth upon the short, green grass, inviting to the most jaded appetite. And, as our appetites were the reverse of jaded, we fell to; and but disorderly remnants remained to tell the once orderly tale: and as we finished, Uncle Robert said to the company generally, with a satisfied sigh, "The

proof of the pudding is in the eating. We have eaten that pudding and found it good." Then, as we lay on the soft grass, or rested against the smooth trunks of the towering trees, chat and banter, masculine wreathed with smoke, and feminine unwreathed, flew around the merry company—winged thoughts, invisible to the eye but sensible to the ear, apparent upon the receptive mind by smile or answering jest.

"No," said Mr. Bee, as he looked approvingly at his wife's fair forehead, from which the dark hair rippled back in little waves, and quizzically at Mlle. Efff's thatched front, "with all respect to the present company, give me the hair-dressing of our immediate ancestors."

"But," said Mme. Efff, taking up the cudgels for her offspring, "one feels all out of doors with a perfectly bare forehead—so uncovered."

"But, Madame," replied Mr. Bee, "evidently our ancestresses didn't feel so, and why should we? And besides why should one—like ma'm'selle there—cover an intellectual forehead" (Mademoiselle smiled again) "and so reduce herself to the level of the woman who must cover her unintellectuality in self-defense" (Mademoiselle insensibly pushed back her bangs), "thanking her stars meantime that her apparently intellectual sisters cover theirs likewise, and so render it possible for her to be mistaken for one of their ilk? And why should our wives and sisters ape Mlle. Demimonde, when they certainly don't approve of her?"

"But it's the fashion," said Mrs Cee (whose bang was positively awful), "and one might as well be out——"

"Speaking of bangs," broke in Mr. Aa, with an evident looking toward peace, "reminds me of a good story, illustrating the penalty sometimes incurred by wearing a combination of bangs and bandoline."

"Let's hear it," said Uncle Robert—Aunt Hepzibah uses bandoline on the little spit-curl on each temple.

"Well," said Mr. Aa, "the girl that the story is told about went to church one summer morning with her George. It was hot; and the flies, emulating Satan, flew about seeking whom they might devour. At first their attentions were impartially divided among the congregation, to the joy of Mr. Satan and the despair of the Spirit of Charity. But soon the worshipers in the

immediate vicinity of our girl—who was pretty, and whose brown locks, instead of wilting in the heat, like those of her neighbors, curled crisply over her fair forehead—began to experience personal relief, and to observe an unusual buzzing around her pretty head. ‘Did you ever see so many flies in your life, Nell!’ said her George, as they walked down the aisle at the conclusion of service. ‘I’ll never do it again, George,’ replied Nell, almost in tears. ‘Do what?’ said George, in astonishment. ‘Why, I curled my hair with sugar and water this morning!’ answered Nell; and then the flies discovered her again, and gamboled over her as she walked down the steps.”

We all laughed—Uncle Robert roared, and I heard him say in an undertone to his wife, “Do you ever use sugar and water?” Aunt Hepzibah suddenly stopped laughing and looked at him. He thereafter only laughed, and in a perfunctory way.

“I suppose he married her,” said M. Dé.

“Well, the story doesn’t say,” replied Mr. Aa, “but it would be only natural.”

“And then they went to housekeeping,” said Mrs. Aa.

“And he mixed her bandoline for her,” said I.

“Never!” ejaculated Jemima.

“Apropos of housekeeping,” said Mr. Aa,—“by the way, my dear, do you remember our early trials with Bridget and the range?”—to his wife.

“Quite too well,” she replied.

“Apropos of housekeeping,” he continued, “I heard the other day of a patent issued to a St. Louis man for an automatic fire-lighting machine. It might be taken at first sight for an infernal machine, but it isn’t. It consists of a hollow brass tube, charged with chlorate of potassium, attached to a clock and a sulphur match. You set the indicator at, say, seven o’clock, and put the machine down in front of the range, in which is the coal and wood all ready to be lighted. Then you go to bed. When seven o’clock arrives the clock lights the match, which lights the contents of the tube, which lights the fire, and when you come down there is the range all ready for cooking. Single women don’t pine for handy, good-natured husbands any more: the machine takes their place, and doesn’t growl at the breakfast which you would otherwise have to cook for the human fire-lighter.”

"Let us get one," Jemima said to me.

"All right," I replied, "then you can dispense with your handy, good-natured husband, and——"

"Stuff and nonsense!" she exclaimed, and the rest laughed; but Mlle. Efff said she thought a husband was better than any patent fire-lighter; whereat certain of us men felt somewhat compassionate, for Mademoiselle's matrimonial chances seemed as if they might be somewhat remote.

"Ah, mad'moiselle," said M. Dé, "matrimony is not always *couleur de rose*: listen to this." And he took a newspaper cutting from his pocket and read:

"He counted the kisses. Curious record of matrimonial salutes kept by a Frenchman. Perhaps of all nations in the world the French are most given to the practice of statistics, and in carrying it out they take into consideration all manner of subjects which would never enter the minds of other people. As a case in point it is narrated of a Frenchman, who recently died, that on his wedding day, some twenty years ago, he took the resolution of keeping a yearly record of the number of kisses exchanged with his wife until their union should be severed by the death of one or the other. He was destined to be the first to go; but when on his sick-bed, foreseeing that he would not recover, he begged a friend to let the world know the result of his twenty years of account keeping. During the first year of wedded life the kisses exchanged reached the colossal figure of 36,500, or on an average 100 a day, but in the following twelve months there was a notable decrease, not more than 16,000 being inscribed on his register; whilst the third year shows a still greater falling off, the average number of kisses being but ten a day. After the lapse of five years a further reduction is recorded, and the account keeper's task was simplified, for only two kisses were exchanged during each twenty-four hours—one in the morning on rising, and the other on retiring to rest. Later on, during the last ten years of his married life, they only kissed each other on leaving for or returning from a journey, and he had hence very little trouble in making up his annual domestic statistics."

"Beware, Miss Efff!" said the Professor—and he took care that Aunt Eunice should not hear him—"think of the sensible woman who, having read Winchell's description of the Last Man,

ever after refused to marry, for fear her remote descendant might be that last, lone man."

But Mlle. Efff did not seem to take kindly to the warning.

"Can't some one tell us a story?" said Uncle Robert, upon whom the matrimonial drift of the conversation seemed to jar.

"Oh, that will be just the thing!" exclaimed Jemima.

"But, if you are willing, let us first go to the top of the light-house and see the sun set," said M. Dé to her, as the red rays streamed in among the trees, "and then we will sit around the camp-fire and tell stories until the moon rises."

The proposition was agreed to by acclamation, and we ascended.

From that height, above the trees, the great river stretched away in the distance, a broad, silver band through the level green, while at our feet the shining water-ways among the wooded islands crept in and out, in and out beneath the heavy, overhanging limbs, seeming like polished paths about some vast demesne. And as the sun sank in the western sky, his rays of orange flame burned on the greater flood, and shone with softened gleam on still, deep pool and winding water-way, till, deepening to the glowing red of embers soon to die, his fires were quenched within the waiting clouds, and night spread, ashen-hued, over the darkening world.

The camp-fire blazed brightly as we gathered around it, sending fitful gleams among the black and silent trunks, making the cordon of the night fantastic with strange, shadowy forms that seemed to flit on soundless feet around the circle from the fire.

"Now," said Jemima, as the light flashed unevenly upon the semi-circle of recumbent figures, "now we are ready—who will begin?"

Abashed by that sense of duty spurred yet loth to move, or eagerness to speak checked by timidity, each one was silent—the silence of expectancy. When Mr. Aa, with the slight apparent nervousness of the pioneer, said, "If you don't mind listening to a poem, I'll give you one that the scene recalls. Did any of you ever hunt deer by torchlight?"

M. Dé and I said we had, while the rest asked him to describe it.

"That's what the poem will do," he answered, "but you ought to understand, before I begin, something of the *modus operandi*."

They hunt the deer in that way in the Adirondack region, where the scene of the poem is laid, only in the months of June and July—after that, with dogs. The 'jack,' which is a lantern made of birch bark generally, open on one side, is fixed on the end of a short pole which is fastened at the prow of the canoe, and as the light is thrown forward of course, the hunter in the fore part of the boat and the paddler at the stern are in darkness. As the canoe moves along the marshy, wooded shores, the deer sees nothing but the light and stands fascinated, while the men see the deer clearly and, if the wind is from the deer to them, are able to approach very near, as the paddler makes absolutely no sound—which is the height of the art of paddling. Of course they can't hunt in moonlight, for then the deer can see the men and the boat. And now," continued he, with a smile in his voice, "as I've given you the text, I'll preach the sermon. Better all make yourselves comfortable, so that you can go to sleep in true orthodox fashion."

There was the usual laughing protest, and likewise the usual settle looking to present comfort and possible future repose.

"The poem," he began, "is called

A NIGHT HUNT.

I.

Where Racquette's rushing waters spread
Their tide, erst swift, o'er shallow bed,
Pausing to kiss the reedy shore
With kiss of peace, and lave the hoar
Old pine trees' roots in rippling floods,
And spread in nooks wherein the broods
Of callow ducklings blithe may play
Throughout the long, bright summer day,
And dive and swim and trim each plume
Of downy gold, and when the gloom
Of night falls o'er the landscape, warm
'Neath sheltering wings rest safe from harm;
Where, high upon the wooded hills,
Beside the banks of trickling rills,
And in the vales' cool, shady groves,
The timid deer securely roves,

His carpet moss, and for his roof
The branching hemlocks' feathery woof;—

The sunset beams athwart the sky
In molten gold shot wide and high,
And garmented the glowing west
In robes of crimson, and impressed
On leaf and shrub and branching limb,
On hemlock's crest raised tall and slim,
On blasted pine whose naked boughs
Raised high their arms as if in vows
Of vengeance 'gainst the scathing flame
From which their barren woes all came,
On rippling waves by zephyrs tossed,
On shining wakes where wild fowl crossed
Their tiny swells, on all the scene
Their wondrous glow incarnadine.

II.

And as on wave and shore did rest
These burning glories of the west,
Their gleams with roseate colors dyed
A birch canoe which stemmed the tide,
And starred with gems the paddle's blade,
Whose dipping echoes swept the glade,
So still was water, earth and air
In that June sunset's reddening glare.

And faint the western glory grew;
The trees their lengthened shadows threw
Across the water's still expanse,
And insect pipes did but enhance
The stillness of the evening hour,
While heralding night's coming power.

The listening hunters softly bent
To catch the sounds which faintly rent
The pall of silence, and which bore,
From wooded knolls beyond the shore,
Light fall of hoofs and part of grass
And snap of twigs, as on did pass

The hungry deer to pastures green
Beside the water's paling sheen.

But now the moon, which erst abode
Veiled by light clouds, in splendor rode
Athwart the zenith's blue expanse,
And touched the waves with silvery glance,
And lighted up with sun-like gleam
The borders of the fringed stream.
But as more bright the waters grew,
So o'er each brow hot anger flew,
For suited not were moonlight beams
To hunters' deeds on woodland streams.
"But patience," whispered each to each,
"The moon floats down the western reach."
So to an overhanging branch
They firmly moored their fragile launch,
And, sheltered by surrounding shade,
Laid softly down the boatman's blade,
And rested, on the bottom stretched
Of their frail craft, till time had fetched
The moon far on her westward way,
And darkness had resumed its sway.

III.

Oh gentle hush, when o'er the land
Night stretches forth her dusky hand!
The twinkling stars peep through the shade;
The insects hum far down the glade;
Borne with the ripples by the boat,
The passing sticks thud as they float;
The songsters of the night, by edge
Of slimy bank or reedy sedge,
Sing to their mates in pipings high,
While some old patriarch, sitting nigh,
In gruffer tones, of muddy taint,
Booms forth the burden of his plaint.

The wreaths of mist, like sheeted ghosts,
Sweep o'er the water's breast in hosts,

Twisting and turning as they fly,
Like to lost souls in agony,
While sobs and sighs and prayers and moans
Breathe through the pines in saddest tones.
And far o'erhead, in eddying streams,
Aurora's fires throw wide their gleams;
Leaping aloft in silvery light,
Now changing quick to ruby bright,
Glowing and paling like the blush
On maiden's cheek, flush after flush,
As rests she 'neath th' admiring eye
Of 'passioned lover standing nigh.

Oh sacred hour, how soft the spell
Thou castest over those who dwell
Amid the scenes which nature spreads
With lavish hand for him who treads
With open heart and watchful eye
Her various paths, and passes by
Nor rock, nor tree, nor leaf, nor flower
That speaks not of that mighty Power
Who shaped their form and gave them birth—
The Maker of all heaven and earth.

IV.

But downward, downward sinks the moon;
Her gentle light, to earth a boon,
Fades slowly, and o'er land and sky
Night spreads her blackest canopy.

Now is the "jack" placed in the prow;
From birchen walls the candles glow;
The boat moves from the water's brink—
While startled frogs in terror sink
With hasty croak to muddy deeps—
Then slow among the sedges creeps;
While at the prow, with lips compressed,
And rifle on his knee at rest,
And glance shot far into the night,
Ahead, and to the left and right,

One hunter sits, and at the stern
Rests he whose blade with dexterous turn
Propels upon its watery way
The sylvan craft of birch-bark grey.

V.

If haply on the margin stood
One whose quick eye roved o'er the flood,
How weird to him the scene which lay
Before him spread; the widening ray
That stretched itself across the night—
A solid bar of misty light;
The boat and figures scarce more black
Than shrouding gloom which round their track
Its curtain drew; the river's fringe,
Dark with the midnight's dusky tinge,
Quick gleaming, as the turning prow
Cast o'er its curves the lantern's glow.

VI.

But hark! a splash, a crackling tread
Falls on the night air far ahead.
The boat leaps toward the welcome sound,
And o'er the water, bound on bound,
Speeds as it were with life instinct.
No paddle's sound is with it linked,
Though fall the strong strokes thick and fast;
The rocks and trees fly dimly past;
And now into a hidden reach,
With reeds thick growing on the beach,
It swift pursues its silent way,
And lights the banks with glimmering ray.
The trees, high arching overhead,
Start forth as if the risen dead
Had sprung into the lantern's light,
Then quickly sink back into night,
And all the gloomy way does teem
With shadowy forms that ghostly seem.

But now the rifle's raised in air ;
The paddle stops ; for in the glare
An antlered form is dimly seen—
A flash, as of the lightning's sheen,
With blinding light illumines the shore ;
The echoes verberate and roar
From hill to hill with lessening boom ;
The vale, erst still as darkest tomb,
Now rings with rush of feet, as fly
The deer to other haunts ; near by
The owl shrieks shrill in wild dismay ;
The prowling wolf howls, rest of prey.
But see ! Ahead the wounded deer
Struggles through foam in frantic fear ;
Rises and falls in bloody tide,
The life fast ebbing from his side.
But feebler now his dying throes ;
Soon at an end will be his woes ;
A choking sob—a gurgling moan—
And in the reeds the deer lies prone.

VII.

The deed is done, the hunt is o'er,
And backward from that fatal shore
The hunters wend their joyous way
By glimmer from the coming day,
The while the loon's mad laugh does wake
The sleeping echoes of the lake,
And heralds the approaching morn
With wildest notes of nature born ! ”

“ Graphic ! ” said Uncle Robert, sententiously.

The sentiment was echoed, and the relator duly thanked.

“ How delicious to hunt in that romantic manner ! ” said Mlle. Efff.

“ You would probably experience the buck-fever, Mademoiselle,” remarked M. Dé, somewhat dryly.

“ What is that ? ” she asked.

"Such a disarrangement of the nerves, owing to the excitement of the occasion," he replied, "that your gun would probably shake out of your hands, and you require to be held—I mean you would require *it* to be held by your companion."

Every one laughed, and Aunt Eunice asked (by means of her next neighbor) if there really was such a fever.

"It's a fact," said Mr. Aa. "Even the strongest men are affected by it the first time they attempt to shoot at a deer—very few people escape."

"What is a loon?" asked Jemima, "and is their cry really so dreadful?"

"A loon, my dear madam," replied Mr. Aa, "is an aquatic bird about as large as a small goose, which can dive quicker and swim further and faster under water than any bird I know of, and its cry, especially in the early morning, sounds like the laugh of a maniac, and can be heard in still weather for a mile or more."

"I can vouch for the rapidity of the dive," I said. "One day, in Round Lake, a loon came up within twenty yards of the boat, and sat still on the water looking at us—we were at anchor, fishing. I quietly picked up my gun, which was loaded with heavy shot, and fired. The bird dove before the shot could reach him."

"Perhaps you missed—or killed him," said Mrs. Cee.

"I missed him to be sure," I replied, "because he got out of the way in time, but the shot struck the exact spot where he went down. And he wasn't even touched, for he came up away on the other side of the boat, and laughed. We gave up fishing, and chased that loon for two hours—they rarely fly when pursued, as they are very heavy on the wing—but he got away, and we gave it up, and he literally had the laugh on us."

"How funny!" said Jemima. "Now it is some one else's turn."

"Well," said M. Efff—a grave, thoughtful-looking man, who spoke English perfectly, as indeed they all did—"I can give you a legend—of a rather serious cast though, and in verse."

General approbation greeting the offer, he began:

"It is the legend of

LORD ETHELBERT: HIS QUEST.

From out the chimney's massive throat
The burning wood shot flying beams
That spread o'er ceiling, wall and floor
In bright and ruddy streams :

Danced o'er the bookshelves, grim and tall,
Which held within their oaken arms
Vast store of quaint and ancient lore,
And by-gone witches' charms :

Lit up with transient gleam old swords
And rusty helms and coats of mail ;
And tattered banners seemed to wave,
Swept by their silent gale :

And figures armed with spear and shield
And clad in steel, from corners dim
Stalked out for but an instant's space,
Called by the firelight's whim.

Within his chair Sir Royal sate,
A musty tome upon his knee,
Whose yellow leaves told wondrous tales
Of deeds by land and sea :

Brave deeds of knight for ladye fair ;
Of corsair on the stormy main ;
Of those who fought, the Holy Tomb
To win from Paynim reign.

And as he turned them o'er and o'er—
Those leaves by time so sore distressed—
He chanced upon an ancient tale,
" Lord Ethelbert : His Quest."

It told how, in the days of old,
Lord Ethelbert in distant lands
Had wandered far, a ladye fair
To save from cruel hands.

And as he rode, his way, one night,
Lay through a forest dark and lone,

Where giant trees rose high o'erhead,
And winds did weirdly moan.

The moon was hid within the folds
Of blackest clouds which hung the sky ;
His path was plunged in deepest gloom,
Lit by no kindly ray.

When sudden—and the sight appalled !
A Shape before him hugely loomed,
More black than even blackest night
That all around him gloomed.

And on his ear a solemn voice
Fell, saying, "Lo, thy sins appear !"
And as it ceased, the forest dark
Was filled with Shapes more drear.

In wild amaze Lord Ethelbert
Spurred on his steed those Shapes to flee ;
But round him, in a horrid rank,
They loomed immovably.

The trees bent down their unseen boughs
To smite him as he fled beneath ;
Till, wounded, bleeding and bespent,
He sank upon the heath.

But as he lay with trembling limbs—
Though braver lance did never ride—
A glory filled the awful place
And heaven-like voices cried,

* * * * *

Sir Royal turned the moldering leaf—
The page was blank, the words unsaid ;
In other hand were writ the words,
"Who told this tale is dead."

And thus it is, Sir Royal mused,
Our sins are told—are told too well ;
Rung are they on our quaking ears
As if they rang our knell.

And as these brands burn dull and dim,
And send their beams scarce to my feet,
And leave the room in shadows vast,
That close around me meet,

So doth our courage fade and die,
When horrid shapes, held to our view,
Do cluster round in fearful ranks,
With terrors ever new.

And they who lift them to our gaze—
Our gaze appalled—do they e'er show
The way t' escape their dreadful forms—
A way that we can go?

Will they e'er fill th' unwritten page,
And give our ears the welcome cry
That to our souls blest light shall bring—
High heaven's sweet minstrelsy?

Lord Ethelbert, upon his Quest,
His Sins did find, all unaware;
Did he not ride another quest
To find Forgiveness fair?

Oh, ye who point to us one road,
The road that leads to black Despair,
Be sure ye point the other road,
Where stands Forgiveness fair!"

"I think that is rather a reflection on the ministry," said Aunt Hepzibah, somewhat severely.

"It is and it isn't," I said. "It seems to me to refer only to those who preach 'natural depravity' and the inevitable and eternal damnation of the wicked, that is, *every one except 'the elect.'*"

"That reminds me of a sermon I heard last winter," said Mr. Aa, "delivered by a very young man, Rev. Pea Green by name. He preached from the text 'Why do the wicked live?' and spent three-quarters of an hour in not answering the question. He intimated, however, that really none but the elect had any right to live; and as he did so, a satisfied and comfortable look

swept over the greater part of the congregation. But he congratulated his hearers that, although the wicked did unfortunately live, yet there would happily come a day when they would be eternally damned: and he seemed to derive great consolation from the thought."

"I should judge," said M. Efff mildly, "that the poem referred especially to those who are continually blaming us for our shortcomings and holding them up to our view, but who give us no kindly advice how to lead better lives."

"There is the moon!" said M. Dé, as she opportunely smiled down upon us through the trees. "We must soon be going, I am sorry to say; but before we go, we must ask a story from the bride."

"From me?" said Jemima, in alarm, "I can't——"

"Oh, we know better," said Mrs. Bee, "for the children came home on Sunday with an account of a wonderful story you had told them in the woods."

"But that was only a child's story," replied Jemima, "and I don't know any others."

"Then give us a child's story," said M. Dé gallantly, "and we will all be children and believe every word you say."

"Well," said she, looking with a troubled face up at the moon, "if you insist——"

"We insist!"—in chorus.

"Then I'll tell you the story of

THE SPIRITS OF FIRE.

Long, long ago—millions of years ago—no one lived on the earth but the Spirits of Fire. They rode on the long tongues of flame that shot far up into the sky, and danced on the fiery waves of melted rock, and laughed when the white-hot spray dashed over them.

There were two kinds of Spirits of Fire—the Red and the White. The Red Spirits were ruled by their King, and the White Spirits by their Queen: and the King of the Red Spirits fell in love with the Queen of the White Spirits, and she with him, and they were married. Then what rejoicing there was—for before that time the

Red and White Spirits had not always been very friendly. For the White Spirits had insisted on keeping the very hottest places for themselves—for wherever it was hottest, there the Spirits of Fire loved best to be—and had driven the Red Spirits out where it was colder; so that there had been a great deal of quarreling between the two. But now that the King and Queen were married, every one hoped that the old differences would be settled, and all live together in harmony. And so they did for many years.

In process of time two sons were born to them, and each of the boys was red on one side and white on the other, except that both of the arms of one were red, and both of the arms of the other white. So they were called Red Arms and White Arms; and the Red Spirits claimed that Red Arms belonged more to them, and the White Spirits that White Arms belonged more to them; but the King and the Queen said that they both belonged to the whole nation.

When they were pretty well grown up—that is, when they were about twenty thousand years old—there came one day a messenger from the Sun, riding on a shaft of light, who said that the good King and Queen must come home. For that was the way the Spirits of Fire died, or rather left the earth: the Sun, the great parent of the Earth and King Supreme of all the Spirits of Fire on it, sent his messengers for them when he wanted them, and they never came back again, but lived happily in his great Kingdom of White Light forever.

So the King and Queen called all their subjects together, and bade them good-bye, and placed their crowns on the heads of their two sons, and appointed them joint rulers over the whole nation. Then they joyfully sat on the shaft of light with the Sun's messenger; and in an instant they were gone, and were seen no more.

For awhile all went well. Red Arms and White Arms ruled lovingly together, and the nation was happy. But after a time both Red Arms and White Arms fell in love with a beautiful Red Spirit, whose hair was like a waving, red flame, and whose whole person glowed like a live coal, and whose lovely, smiling face shone with the softest golden light imaginable. Each tried to win her heart and her hand, but she could not make up her mind. The matter became the talk of the entire nation, the Red Spirits saying

that she ought to marry Red Arms, while the White Spirits said that White Arms ought to have her; and so the nation was divided. Every day she was urged by one side or the other to make her choice; until at last she discovered that she really loved Red Arms the best: and the very next time he came to urge her to marry him she said yes, and then Red Arms was happy indeed. But White Arms was in despair, and he vowed he would be revenged.

The wedding was a grand affair. All the Red Spirits came; and the oldest Red Spirit stood on a great billow of fire, and blessed the pair as they knelt before him, and pronounced them husband and wife. Then there was dancing on the sea of fire, and wild races on the flying tongues of flame, and every one was happy. But the White Spirits stayed away.

Red Arms and his wife chose for their home a great island in the sea of fire, and there they established their court; and the Red Spirits came and lived near them. But White Arms held his court in a white-hot valley on the other side of the earth, and there the White Spirits came. And day by day he brooded over his disappointment, until he was beside himself with rage. Then he determined that he would take the revenge he had sworn to have; and the White Spirits said they would help him. So they dug a hole clear through the earth to underneath Red Arms' island, and put in the bottom of it a great quantity of the most explosive gas known, and filled up the hole on their side. Soon the heat of the earth made the gas expand, and it expanded more and more. Till at last, one day, when Red Arms had given a grand ball on his island, to which all the Red Spirits were invited, the gas blew up, and blew the island, with Red Arms and his wife and all the Red Spirits on it, away up into the air, and it never stopped until it was two hundred and fifty thousand miles away from the earth; and there it became a little world all by itself, and commenced to revolve around the earth.

Now, as you know, Space is intensely cold. And as time went on, this little world of the Red Spirits—which we will call, for the present, the Red World—began to shrink, and grow more and more solid, and smaller and smaller, in the cold. And as the Sun saw that his Spirits of Fire were unhappy in the increasing cold, he sent his messengers for them, one after the other, as he had done for the King and Queen, and brought them home to

him. But Red Arms and his wife would not go, but preferred to remain alone upon their little world.

More and more their Red World shrank in the cold of Space, until there was not even room for them to stand, for the Spirits of Fire were very large. So their bodies shrank into their Red World, and became a part of it, until there was nothing left of them but their heads, side by side, which became so cold that they couldn't shrink any more. But still Red Arms and his wife were together. Then he turned his face away from the earth, for he couldn't bear to look upon it; but she kept hers toward it, to see what was going on—and there they are to this day. And we call them the Moon; and the face we see in the moon is the face of Red Arms' wife looking down upon us, glowing with that soft, golden light that makes the heart of every lover upon the earth happy—for she loves Red Arms."

"And I guess that another bride is in love with her husband," said Uncle Robert with a kindly laugh, in which the others joined.

And sailing home by moonlight, the winding water-ways seemed fairy ways, where black, mysterious shadow gave place to illusive light: and the songs only ended at the Sorel wharf.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN EXCURSION; SOREL, AND THE PINES.

AGAIN we join a party, and leaving Sorel in a steamer in the forenoon, sail down the St. Lawrence to the mouth of the St. Francis. Ascending that narrow stream, whose brown water resembles that from the South Jersey and Southern swamps and is suggestive of cedars and snakes, we wind through the level country, with farms, and here and there a village, on either hand. One of these villages is a seat of a lord of a manor, the manor comprising the adjacent country, and being one of the few, if not the only one, left in Canada. Here the farmers cannot own their farms, but pay rent therefor to the lord—must even have their grain ground at the lord's mill and pay well for the enforced privilege. And the lord is a woman!

At length, about noon, we reach the village of St. Francis, lying at the top of the high river bluff, the large stone Roman Catholic church overlooking the river, as do also two Saints Militant, who stand in their respective niches in the wall and scowl, in belligerent attitudes, from under their helmets at us heretics.

About a mile beyond St. Francis is a village of Abenekis, a civilized tribe of Indians. Thither we walk, and purchase sundry baskets and other unnecessaries from the chief's daughter, a remarkably pretty girl, whose clear olive skin, and beautifully rounded cheeks and chin, and large almond-shaped eyes, make us buy what we wish we hadn't when the glamor wears off the next day.

Dinner on board our steamer, and we sit on deck forward and smoke and chat, till the lights of Sorel appear, vying with the moon—and we wish they were fifty miles further on.

Moonlight again and on the Richelieu. We—two—have rowed—or rather one has rowed, the other taken her chatty ease—up the river in the dusk of the evening, the banks growing dimmer and blacker, and the water of a mysterious grey; when we

reach a turn in the still-flowing stream, and the round face of the moon looks out at us over the tops of the trees.

The light craft headed down stream; the oars shipped; the cushions disposed for comfort of body, for comfort of mind, for comfort of talk, and for comfort of quiet, and we drift back down the silent river. The trees on the banks pass shadowy by; the little wisps of mist begin to rise from the water's breast; the black hulls of anchored steamers loom up in the deceptive light; the lights of the town come into view, are here by us, are behind us, and we float out upon the bosom of the broad St. Lawrence. The gentle swell sways us to and fro; the fires of the aurora rise from north and south, and meet in the zenith in a silent clash of shooting, ghostly flame; the river banks grow dim and indistinct, and we two seem floating out at sea, away from a work-a-day world. But one of us finds that it is a decidedly work-a-day world, before the lights of Sorel again appear, against wind and tide.

A day or two after, invitations to a funeral were sent to Uncle Robert and me—women here never attend funerals. They were *printed* on a double sheet of letter-paper with broad, black edges, at the top of the page being a wood-cut of a very small weeping willow trying to droop over an urn standing upon a square pedestal, and not quite succeeding, the pedestal and urn being too high; and they read thus:

“Sir:

You are requested to attend the funeral of the late Blank Blank, on Saturday, the blankth instant, at 4 o'clock P. M.

The funeral cortege will leave his late residence, corner Blank and Blank Streets, for Christ Church, and thence to the place of interment.”

In the house, to which we first went, a piece of crape with flowing ends was fastened around the hat of each by some women in attendance, when we repaired to the English Church, whither the coffin had already been carried, and where the post mortem laudation, like charity, was made to cover a (probable) multitude of sins. Thence, after service, we all marched to the grave two by two, the old minister in his white robe, over which was an enormous crape band with a still more enormous shoulder-knot,

leading the procession, followed by the pall bearers, likewise with scarfs and knots, carrying the coffin. There we found a great crowd of urchins of both sexes, through which we pushed our way; and the but lately animated dust was made a part of the dust under our feet. As we turned to go, a woman was pointed out to us who was the village layer-out-of-the-dead. What a link is she between them and the living—a hyphen between Time and Eternity.

The time of our departure upon our further travels arriving—which means that Aunt Hepzibah had exhausted the resources of the place—we held a council of war, to which were bidden the Aas, the Bees and the Cees, as representing the foreign contingent, and the Dés and the Efffs, as representing the native. The principal impression left upon my mind by this council was the extreme diversity of opinion entertained and expressed, prominent among which was Aunt Hepzibah's. She had evidently made up her mind in the privacy of its own recesses, and it seemed to me the conclave was called, not so much for her to receive, as to generously impart information: its ostensible object was, of course, to repay in some measure the hospitalities we had received from the invited. The plan at last agreed upon was that we should leave upon the afternoon of the day after the morrow, by the steamer, for Chambly; thence to Montreal by rail, and thence as fancy and time should dictate. This happily settled, refreshments were in order, during which Uncle Robert (innocently, I must believe) prepared and exploded a mine, to his own destruction.

The ices stage having been reached, he was observed drawing a series of little o's with pencil upon a piece of paper on his knee, thus:

o o o o o o o o o

"Can you," said he to Mrs. Cee at his side, during a lull in the chatter, "can you make those nine o's into a command to depart, by the addition of five straight lines?"

Mrs. Cee would try, and asked M. Efff to help her. Their united wisdom was, however, found unavailing, and gradually the whole company was drawn to the task, but to no success.

“It’s very simple,” said Uncle Robert, “thus :” and he drew,

q o o d q o d q o

We all looked—and pleased inquiry gradually stiffened into cold rigidity on the faces of our guests, and horrified apprehension on ours. In the midst of a dead silence, the Professor, who had been peering at the hieroglyph through his spectacles, exclaimed innocently,

“Why it reads ‘Good God go!’”

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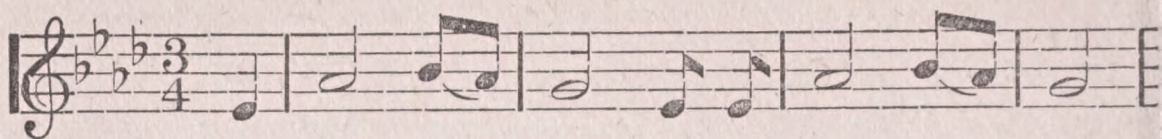
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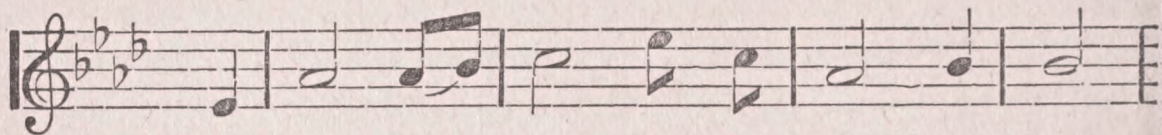
I will draw a kindly veil over the scene which followed, both during and after the departure of our guests. If a cipher can ever be less than a cipher, Uncle Robert was that quantity for a week.

The next afternoon I missed Jemima (somehow or other I always do miss her when she is not in sight) and thinking she might have gone to the pines, I walked thither. The little town was dormant in the summer heat, which, as I reached the stubbly fields, rose quivering toward the cloudless sky. From shady nooks within the scattered trees, the sleepy twitter of the birds fell on the silent air, while all around the insect hum droned drowsily beneath the burning light. From grassy ambush by the winding path, the grasshoppers sprang on their whirring wings, and sailed away to some more distant blade. The nearing pines slept in their sombre green, while far-off crows flapped cawing to their roosts, and all the stretch of field and grove and forest line was faintly silvered by the summer haze which clad the horizon’s verge in shining mists of fairyland.

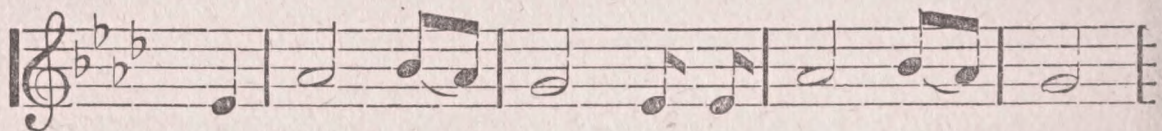
As I neared our favorite spot beneath the spreading branches of a grand old pine, whose roots were deeply covered with the fallen brown needles of many a year long gone, I heard Jemima’s voice in dreamy singing of a song whose music seemed almost a revery in sound. As I came near unobserved, I saw her lying in the grace of happy solitude, her head upon her pretty, clasped hands against a carpeted root of the old pine, and gazing at the flecks of blue through the interlacing boughs. And as she lay she sang:



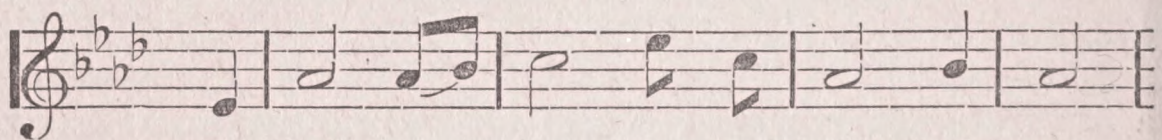
I love my Love when the ro - ses bloom:



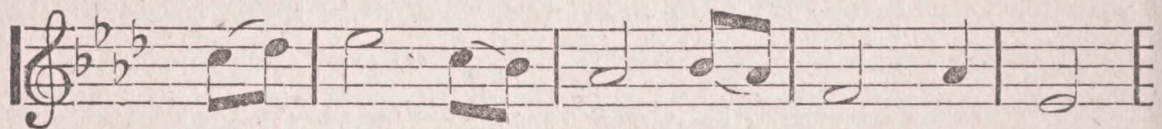
I love my Love when the har - vests come:



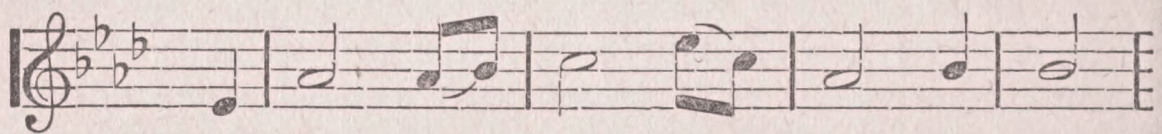
I love my Love when the har - vests go:



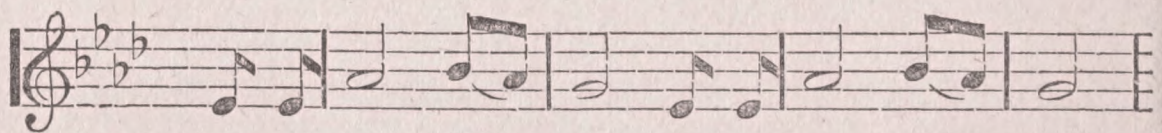
I love my Love when earth's white with snow.



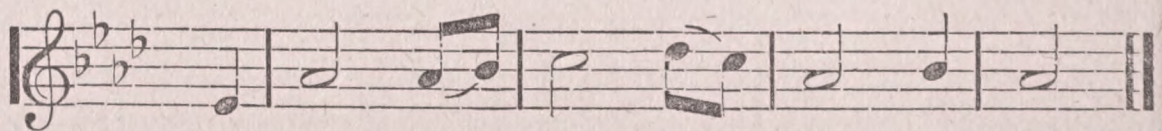
Come cloud, come sun, come heat, come cold,



I'll love my Love till Time grows old;



And when Time grows old and when Time shall die,



I'll love my Love be - yond the sky.

"Will you?" I said.

She started up. "Oh, how you frightened me! You shouldn't come stealing into a lady's bower, scaring away all her lovely guests!"

"I didn't see them fly," I said.

"No, how could you?" she replied. "They came to smile and laugh for my eyes and ears alone, not for the common herd"—with a roguish sparkle in her blue-grey eyes. "And oh, the lovely things they said! And as I lay there on my back, they sat on the branches—they are the chairs you know—and smiled into my very heart, and told me everything they found there. And then they sang——"

"But it was you who sang," I interrupted.

"Of course they used my voice, dear things, for they wanted the trees and birds and squirrels to know how happy we were, and they could only sing to my ears. So I sang——"

"The song they taught you?"

"The song they taught me, and the music and the words——"

"They taught you too?"

"They taught me too, came right out of my heart, where they had put them, and soared and soared until they sounded at the gates of heaven."

"From earth to heaven," I said, "and back again to earth, to sound upon the portals of my heart, and enter in. Darling, do you really love as you sang?"

"John," she said, releasing herself from my arms, and looking at me steadily, yet speaking quietly, "John, you have my heart, my very soul. Take them *with you* to those gates of heaven."

"Where is heaven, John?" she asked, a little after.

"Where do you think?"

"Oh, I'm sure I don't know. I've bothered my head dreadfully, trying to imagine, but I never can imagine. Of course it can't have gates of pearl——"

"How do you know?"

"Well, of course I don't *know*, but it doesn't seem likely, as it isn't a place, a real place, a solid place, I mean."

"Again how do you know?"

"Well, again I don't know; but from what the ministers say the Bible means, I should think it was a kind of state, a state of

being, where we were, but didn't really exist—very happy, of course, but not really living, as we mean living here. Oh, I can't explain, but you know what I mean, dear."

"I think that your idea of heaven," I replied, "is that of most people—as you say, a state, not an actual being, or, if a being, an etherealized one—almost a misty, vapory one, as if we were to be essences, not tangible beings. Now mine is different. I don't attempt to defend it, but this can be said in its defense, that no one knows: that heaven is the place of greatest happiness to every denizen: that each person hoping to reach that place, has the right to imagine what his greatest happiness would be, and a place where that happiness will be found is to him heaven. Now what grander thought than that heaven is the vast globe which is the gravital centre of all planets, suns and systems—of the created universe. That thither our souls, when fitted for its sinless life, fly—how we know not, nor can even guess. That there, *materialized*, with every passion freed from lust, with every virtue cleansed of stain, we lead a life best fitted for our mortal selves, where every talent, of whatever grade, shall find its most supreme development. There art shall soar on nobler wings: there written words acquire a subtler, higher sense: there music lift the soul on harmony, till heaven itself shall seem but dull and cold. There love shall so expand and grow, that all our fellows shall be folded in its arms—yet but our own shall nestle in our hearts. There sweet green fields shall tempt the wandering feet, and dusky shade, by running brooks, those wearied, for the time, by labor well-beloved. There cities raise their domes and towers, and schools abound where they who lack may learn. There well may be the Great White Throne, and He who sits thereon, Supreme, shall smile upon His children; hearten every toiler toward a higher goal, and guide the maze of worlds that whirl through space around that Throne."

"Oh John," she said, while heaven's own light shone in her child-pure eyes, "let us always journey toward that World."

"Darling," I answered, "you shall lead, I will try to follow."

CHAPTER XIX.

ONWARD, AND A DISCUSSION.

"ALL was bustle and confusion." The remark is trite, but in our case, upon the last night of our stay in Sorel, was true: and a combination of bugs and Professor was the cause: and the combination was almost a conglomeration.

The Professor had retired early, and we were all in the parlor, discussing the morrow's flitting, when a sound of agitated movement of the feet came from the region of the ceiling which was underneath his room. At first but casual attention was paid to the phenomenon, until it became so obtrusive as to demand investigation from the most disinterested hearer—and we were naturally interested. Aunt Eunice noticed the attentive cast of our countenances, and demanded the cause, which being explained, she instantly implored us, in a voice that was quite audible—indicating unusual stress for her—to investigate said cause, and herself led the way, we following. Arriving at the Professor's door, the movement within was such as would have led any one to believe that he was in mortal, yet vocally silent, conflict with an assassin: whereupon we (men) burst into the room, the door happening to be unlocked, and what a sight met our astonished gaze!

There was the Professor, lightly attired, careering around, and wildly, yet with strange caution, grasping at his back underneath his only garment. We instantly surrounded him, and demanded the reason of his career. In tones of agony, broken by violent twitches and starts, he explained that he had been giving several — — — (which, being interpreted, meaneth, They-who-bite-for-all-they-are-worth) an airing upon his hand, preparatory to bottling them up for the night; when noticing something interesting—"Oh most interesting, I assure you gentlemen"—in their movements, he bent down to examine said movements more closely, when they, with the activity characteristic of their bugships—"Ah, they are so beautifully quick"—scattered into his bushy beard, and made their way thence to his neck and so to his back, feeding

at every quarter inch as they went upon the all-too-succulent flesh, and were now disporting themselves in a pasture of unwonted extent and juiciness. I asked, in wonder, why he had not taken off the hindering garment?

"Ah, gentlemen," he replied, "I might drag some of them off with it, and so lose them!"

So we commenced a roll of said garment, holding it, at his earnest solicitation, well away from his back and the disporting bugs, which were still, to judge from his contortions, biting fiercely, and rolled it well up to his neck, displaying Their Bugginesses and their sanguinary work, which last consisted of long lines of bites, at beautifully regular intervals, traversing his back in all directions. Their Bugginesses were duly and carefully scraped off on a piece of paper, each taking a last and parting dig as he went, and deposited in their bottle.

Brown paper and vinegar were now deemed in order; and here Aunt Eunice's kindness of heart displayed itself, for she insisted upon soaking the one in the other with her own fair hands, and then sent the plaster, sweetened with consolatory messages, to his room.

There seemed to be not much doubt that Aunt Eunice was becoming interested in entomological pursuits. As for the Professor, his gratitude was touching, as with tears in his eyes he accepted the offering. All the next day he smelt like a vinegar factory.

The "Good God Go" episode having been explained and apologized away, Mr. and Mrs. Aa and M. and Mme. Efff announced their intention of accompanying us up the Richelieu to Chambly, and thence to Montreal, which intention was hailed by us joyfully. Wherefore, after much handshaking by the men and kissing by the women (except Aunt Hepzibah), and the expression of many hopes that we should all meet again (which hopes we knew would never be realized), we left the other of our kind entertainers on the wharf, and at a quarter to six started in the steamer Chambly for Chambly, at the head of navigation up the Richelieu, the river taking the name of the Chambly in its upper (that is, southern) part. On the way we passed the *bateaux* crawling up the stream with the wind, the great square-prowed hulls hardly making a ripple in the water, while the one huge square-sail depending from

the short, thick mast, was barely filled by the lazy breeze, in full accord with which, both the boats and their scanty crews seemed loth to move. We also passed other *bateaux* moored to the banks, waiting for a change in the wind, for their destination was down stream, and they were unable to sail except before the wind. Hence, it is said, *bateaux* sometimes take weeks for the journey from, for instance, Montreal to Quebec, and especially from Quebec to Montreal, for then they have no current to help them.

On either bank the low, square houses of the *habitans*, with their roofs sloping in a gentle *curve* from the central point to the heavy eaves, stood each on its little green farm, and reminded us of one we had visited while driving over the level country a day or two before, where we saw a great pile of huge loaves of bread lying on the top of what appeared to be an out- or summer-kitchen, apparently to cool—for what other reason we could not conceive.

Touching at St. Roche, we reached St. Tours about dark, passing through the great stone locks at the dam in the deepening dusk, when, having touched at St. Denis, we moored at St. Mark (what a multitude of saints!) for the night, the channel being too narrow and tortuous to make night travel safe.

After supper had been cleared away, for it was served in the main cabin, the boat's company gathered around the stove, for the night was damp and chilly, and cards, chat and literature soon occupied their several attentions. But not all were so occupied; for I observed Bolus bring a heavy shawl to Victorine, when the two departed into outer darkness, where I doubt if there was wailing and gnashing of teeth. We had for some time past observed in them love's middle-aged dream, which was beneficent, in that they no longer squabbled (in fact not since we left Boston), but somewhat inconvenient, in that their memories, except as to each other's whereabouts, were remarkably deficient. Likewise did not another couple aggregate around the stove, but segregated themselves to a corner of the cabin, so far as lay in their power dim and distant, where he could be observed, and sometimes faintly heard, breathing entomological nothings into her trumpeted ear. This somewhat-past-middle-aged dream we had also observed, and it was likewise beneficent, in that but one was required to amuse Aunt Eunice's ear-trumpet, and but one to listen

to bug-weighed dissertations. Oh Cupid, what a lad thou art ! Wielder of the destinies, oftentimes, of nations, communities and men, sometimes for weal, more times for woe, here thou hast put thy little finger into our traveling pie, not to stir up into fateful jumble its well-ordered ingredients, but that, from the perforation, its sweets may exude upon the passing world ; and not only upon them, but, flowing upon, may percolate through our crust, to the added sweetness of each of the aforesaid ingredients of our pie.

As Jemima and I settled ourselves to our books, a man near us, whose grave and reserved demeanor and smooth black clothes of generous cut seemed to indicate the professor, said to his companion, as he hung his eye-glasses over his right ear and laid his open book face downward on his knee, " Yes, it is a somewhat vexed question, and I cannot determine how far our *alter ego*, our mental self, can detach itself from our physical, there are so many arguments *pro* and *con*, so many circumstances which would seem to indicate the power, and so many which would seem to contradict it. This incident that you have just shown me would seem to indicate it."

" It undoubtedly does," said his companion, a man of like professional aspect, and whose strong countenance was deeply marked with lines of thought, " and another that I call to mind, adds to its testimony. This is the story, taken from the police records of Brooklyn: Two farmers, father and son, living in the interior of Long Island, were in the habit of bringing produce from their farm to the Brooklyn market, and in order to have it at their stand early in the morning, left the farm about midnight. A portion of the road traversed a deep, lonely hollow, heavily shaded by trees. One night the son started out alone with the wagon, carrying with him a considerable sum of money for purchases in the city. The father, who was prevented from accompanying him by illness, was much worried at the thought of his son's lonely drive, and went to bed and to sleep in that frame of mind. About three o'clock he awoke in a great fright, and told his wife that he had dreamed he had seen his son assaulted by two men in that hollow, dragged from his seat, beaten over the head with a club, robbed, and left for dead ; and that, by the flash of a dark lantern carried by one of the men, he had distinctly seen the face of the other. The wife laughed at the dream, ascribing it to his fears, and advised him to

go to sleep again, which he finally did. Again he awoke, declaring that he had seen his son lying dead in the road by the wagon, from which the horses had been taken. In spite of his wife's protests he arose, harnessed a horse, procured a neighbor, and drove to the hollow; and there they found the son and the wagon exactly in the position he had seen in his dream. They drove on to the city, and put the case into the hands of the police, who, from the accurate description given by the father of the man whose face he had seen by the flash of the lantern in his dream, succeeded at last in arresting one of the murderers, who confessed, implicating his companion, and both were tried, convicted and hung. Now did not that father's mental self, freed by sleep from the shackles of the physical, follow his son, and actually witness the murder?"

"But it did not remain, apparently, at the scene," said the first.

"True," answered his companion, "but for this reason. Its fright and anguish were communicated, how it is impossible, of course, to say, to the physical, creating such a disturbance of the nerve centres, that awakening was the consequence, when—again how we cannot say—the mental was instantly recalled to the aid of the physical (without which it, the physical, would have been powerless), and so perforce left the scene, to return again, however, when again freed from the physical by sleep."

"It is strange, very strange," said the first, "and perhaps this line of thought which is, I will confess, rather new to me, may serve to explain the following incident—dream, vision, whatever you may call it—which happened to my sister. Our brother was lying ill at the family homestead, which is, as you know, in Utica, while she was at her home in Orange, New Jersey; and she knew of his illness, and was naturally anxious. I was with him, and had written her that I would telegraph her should his symptoms become alarming. But the end was nearer than we had expected; and before a telegram could reach her he died, about eleven o'clock at night. That same night, about midnight, she was awakened by what seemed a pressure of her hand, and a voice saying 'good-bye.' She looked to see if her husband was awake, but finding him asleep, concluded that it was all the effect of her imagination, and fell asleep again, when she dreamed that she was in our brother's room at the homestead, and saw him laid out, dead, upon his bed. She awoke in a fright and, awakening her

husband, told him of the pressure of the hand, the voice and the dream, saying that she believed her brother was dead. The next morning my telegram announcing his death reached her. When she came on to the funeral, she asked me minutely as to his situation upon the bed, and then told me the particulars of her dream, which accorded in every detail with his position after he had been laid out, even to the fact that they had been obliged to use two sheets to cover him, he having been very tall."

"Is not that a case directly in point?" said his companion.

"If you will pardon me, gentlemen," interrupted a man sitting near, who had, like myself, been listening to the conversation intently, "I can mention an hallucination to which I was subject during a severe illness some years ago, and which, while not a dream, may illustrate what may be another phase of the subject you are discussing—and I hope you will pardon me for listening, but I was so much interested that I could not help it."

"Certainly, sir," said the first man, with an encouraging smile.

"We should be glad to hear the incident you mention," said the second.

"Well," said the third, "it was this. I was at the time very ill with typhoid-malaria—I think that is what the doctors called it—and had become what is sometimes termed flighty—not delirious. I got the notion that I was someone else, or rather that someone else was lying beside me, very ill indeed and in a great deal of pain and burning up with fever. I felt a great compassion for him; pitied him by word and caress—caressing myself meantime—and thought it my duty to see that he took his medicine regularly, watching the clock on the mantel, and asking the attendant to administer it when the hour had nearly arrived. Then, taking it myself, I would lie back on my pillow, telling the imaginary one to lie down now, and that perhaps he would be better soon. Now may not that have been my stronger mental self watching over my weaker physical self—almost freed, perhaps, from the physical by the inroads of the disease and the near presence of death?—for I almost died."

"Speaking of physical and mental selves," said a man who had been apparently buried in a yellow-covered volume, "how can you explain the fact that sometimes my mind wakes up before my body; that for a time which seems to me an age, and yet

which is probably but an instant or two, I am perfectly conscious of everything around me; can hear and fully enter into, mentally, any conversation; can look at the clock near my bed, through my half-closed eyelids, and note the time; in short, am perfectly awake, and yet cannot move hand or foot?"

"A trance," said one.

"No, not a trance," replied he, "for I see no visions, only realities."

"Probably a nightmare," said another.

"I thought that explanation would be given," he said, "for that name or epithet is generally applied to all 'visions of the head upon the bed' which cannot be understood. No, it is not that, for it is no dream; it is of fact, as I said. Perhaps my mental self wants to wake up—is awake—before my physical can be aroused."

"How do you wake yourself, sir?" said an elderly woman near him.

"The struggle is really terrible, madam," he replied. "I strain every nerve to move, but for a long time, apparently, to no purpose; which invariably gives me the frightened, desperate sensation a man would naturally experience who expected to be able to move, but found he could not. At last I succeed in moving some muscle, when I awake—that is, am able to move—suddenly, but perfectly exhausted."

"Your experience is almost similar to mine, sir," said a short, fat man. "You can see that I haven't very much breathing space——" smiling genially upon the company, and pointing to his neck. "Well, sometimes while asleep, I fall into positions which would, if not changed, result in strangulation. I awake—that is, become conscious that I ought to awake—and then the struggle to awake sufficiently to change my position is, as you very well said, sir"—turning to the last speaker—"really dreadful. Now do you suppose that what you call my mental self has anything to do with it—that is with waking me up to prevent strangulation?"

"It certainly seems so," he replied.

"Decidedly so, I should judge," said the friend of the man with the eye-glasses. "It would seem to me that the mental self, being more easily awakened by disturbance of the nerve centres, wakes first, and then struggles to arouse the physical."

"You may be right, gentlemen," said the fat man, "for sometimes it seems to me as if I could not wake myself up—I feel myself sinking back into unconsciousness—and then a sort of despair comes over me, and I struggle desperately, and at length awake perfectly exhausted, like our friend here."

"These incidents are indeed singular," said the first speaker, "and may possibly, though I hardly think probably, be phases of our subject. But this I think we can safely say: that as the connection between the mind and the body it controls is as yet unascertained, any excursions into that *terra incognita* should not be characterized as useless, although they may lead to no immediate and definite results. Perhaps the strength of some future pioneer, husbanded by the use of the path his unsuccessful predecessor has laid out, may serve to push beyond that predecessor's stopping point, and reach the goal."

This speech, and the incidents related, provoked considerable discussion among the little group that had gradually formed around the speakers, no two persons evincing precisely the same opinion on the subject, and each one apparently arguing himself more firmly into his own, in the effort to convince others.

Discussion languishing, a tale of adventure, as a hope of excitement, was called for; and no one else responding, I related the following:

"In the winter of '74, that very cold winter, the newspapers reported an immensely high ice-mound at the foot of Niagara Falls, and a great accumulation of ice in the river below; and concluding to run up to look at it, my travel was well rewarded. At the foot of the American Fall, the ice-mound, formed by the falling spray, had risen to within a few feet of the top of the Fall, looking like the quarter section of an enormous snow-ball. Ascending to the top, a superb sight presented itself. Before my face—but a few feet away—the mass of water fell in long, straight, rope-like lines, and disappeared with an awful roar in the dark abyss between the precipice of ice and the precipice of rock.

"Descending, I ascended to the level of the Fall, and crossed over to Goat Island, the trees upon which were covered with ice to the depth of several inches, seeming as if they had been cut out of marble, or were the ghosts of dead trees.

“ Keeping on, I went out by the foot-bridge to Terrapin Rock, where the old tower used to stand. When I reached there I observed that a quantity of ice covered with snow had by some means become fixed upon the projecting rocks on the edge of the Horseshoe Fall beyond the rock where I stood, forming a bridge on the extreme edge of the Fall, about one hundred feet long by perhaps ten or fifteen feet wide. Instantly the desire to go upon this bridge and look over the Fall seized me. I dug out a stone from the snow, as heavy as I could lift, and, stepping out as far as I dared, threw it with all my force upon the bridge, which stood firm, the stone sticking fast in the snow. Then I ran back to the island and broke off a good stout staff, and, coming back to Terrapin Rock, commenced the rather trying journey. The snow which covered the ice was itself covered with a thin coating of ice, which broke beneath my feet, thus giving me a good foothold, and as to my head I was sure of that, as I had thoroughly tested its anti-dizziness the preceding summer on shipboard and among the Swiss glaciers and precipices. Prodding my staff heavily into the snow before me to try the way, I walked out until I had reached about the middle of my ice-bridge, and then stopped to look. The sight was the grandest and the most awe-inspiring I have ever beheld. As I looked up the river the curve of the oncoming water seemed almost as high as my head, and, steadying my eye upon some floating particle, the whole mass seemed coming down upon me with an irresistible power that must inevitably carry me over the brink and into eternity; but, with a swift, hissing rush, it swept under me, leaped out, and, with a horrible roar, plunged into the awful chasm, whence huge clouds of spray, like the smoke of its torment, ascending, swept back and over me.

“ Steadying myself by my staff, I sank quietly upon my knees, then stretched myself flat upon my stomach, and looked down over the Fall. You can imagine what I saw. When the spray would clear away, the water, rushing so swiftly as to appear to be drawn into lines and furrows, and springing out under my very face, could be seen to fall, at first a solid, greenish mass, then broken into foam, into a chaos which the eyes could not penetrate. I could feel my bridge trembling with the rush, and realizing that any moment might see it and me following the descending flood, I arose, took one look up and down—a look to last for a lifetime—

and retraced my steps. As I passed the rock I had thrown on the bridge, I could not resist the temptation of dislodging it and seeing it whirl away over the liquid precipice."

This incident provoked considerable discussion, the majority maintaining that it was a foolhardy risk of one's life, while the small minority, of which I was, of course, one, affirmed that where a man had no one dependent upon him, he had a perfect right to risk his life in the accomplishment of any worthy object, and the opportunity to stand where no one had, perhaps, ever stood before, and might never again, and the sight to be obtained from that point of vantage, were by us deemed worthy.

"Worthy fiddlesticks!" I heard an old lady mutter, looking at her son, who had been a most interested listener and one of the minority.

From this the conversation gradually drifted into a discussion as to whether Fate or Providence rules the incidents in men's lives, and so the lives themselves.

"I will tell you about as narrow an escape as I ever had from probable shipwreck and possible death, if you don't mind, ladies and gentlemen," said a man who seemed to exhale, but in a modest, imperceptible sort of way, the odor of tar and wind-swept brine, "and you can draw your own conclusions."

Reassured that we would mind if he didn't, he began:

"We had sailed from New York, bound for Marseilles; and arriving at the Straits, found ourselves becalmed. All that day we drifted in the currents setting down the African coast; and when night came, a heavy fog settled down. The watch was set and the fog-horn started and I turned in. About midnight the first mate woke me up, and reported a large three-master bearing down upon us. I tumbled up on deck in a hurry, and sure enough there she was, drifting toward us broadside, her light looking like a great, misty eye, and she like a phantom of death; for the converging currents were running fast enough to make her stave in our bulwarks if she struck us, and perhaps send us to the bottom. I hailed her, and both crews were set to work getting out fenders and spare spars and coils of rope to break the shock; and her helm was put hard up, and ours jammed hard down, and the sails set to catch whatever breeze might come along. Then we had to stand still and wait: and I tell you, messmates, though it wasn't

long, it seemed to me the longest wait I ever had. It seemed to me as if she was fate, and we, tied hand and foot, couldn't move to escape. Down she came; and her eye grew bigger and brighter, and her sails and spars loomed up sharper and more distinct, until at last we could almost touch her with a boat-hook. When, just as we were beginning to think of the boats, a handful of wind caught us, and we both sheered off into the night—and I never was so glad to see the last of any craft in my life."

As he finished, a young American, whose knickerbockers were evidently worn for use and not for show, spoke up quickly.

"Before you draw your conclusions, let me add a word, and then we can discuss both incidents together, for they are in a manner parallel."

Agreement by the company.

"I was stopping for a few days at Bex, a little town in the Rhone valley above the Lake of Geneva, and determined to attempt the ascent of the Dent de Morcles without a guide, somewhat against the advice of the people at the hotel. So I started out one day—alone, as I couldn't get any one to go with me—and reached the highest *châlet*—and I may say the largest aggregation of fleas I have ever encountered—that evening.

"As I sat on a one-legged milking-stool on the earthen floor on one side of the fire, eating bread and milk out of a wooden bowl with a wooden spoon, and trying not to choke in the smoke that was browning the cheeses on the rafters overhead, I endeavored to get some information as to the way from the three men—a father and two sons—who occupied the other sides of the fire—the daughter, poor girl, was left to herself in a cold corner—but they either could not or would not—could not, I think—give me any, but spent the time in asking questions about America, and whether we spoke Spanish where I lived, and if I had ever met their cousin Jean who had gone there some years before, wondering somewhat that I had not. When bedtime came, they gave me the choice between a corner of their own (and only) bedroom and the haymow. I chose the latter; and there it was that the fleas claimed me for their own, and reveled over me all night.

"The next morning I started early, and about noon, with some little difficulty but without serious accident, thanks to my old

alpenstock, reached the top"—with a little touch of modest pride. "On the way down, which was somewhat more difficult——"

"Unlike the broad way which leadeth unto destruction," said (the nose of) a sanctimonious individual in black and chin-whiskers.

"Unlike 'the broad way *that* leadeth *to* destruction,' which is, I believe, the correct reading," repeated the young man with polite scorn, turning his back upon the intruder; "on the way down, which was somewhat more difficult——"

"Unlike the broad way *which* leadeth *unto* destruction," repeated the catapult of religion.

"I found myself"—without the slightest notice of the catapult—"on the edge of a precipice which seemed to bar further progress, for it appeared to hem me in on every side—everywhere to the right, to the left, before me was, apparently, the sheer fall, and back of me the steep side of the mountain down which I had partly slidden, partly climbed. I dug my alpenstock into a cleft of the rock and, clinging to it, stopped to reconnoitre. As I looked, a vast, grey mass slowly rose up the precipitous wall, and the head of the cloud—the destroyer—appeared. For all day in the valley far below, a storm had raged, the faint roll of its thunder reaching my ears through the bright sunlight, and the jagged tongues of the lightning fascinating me as I watched them shooting from cloud-top to cloud-top, like fiery snakes at play. But now the storm had cleared, and the clouds, rolling up the mountain's side, were upon me, to envelope me in their chilling folds from which there was, of course, no escape. For you all probably know"—looking around with modest deference—"that when the cloud catches a man at a high altitude in a dangerous situation, the only thing to do is to sit still and wait until it rolls farther up and releases him, for it is impossible to see clearly ten steps ahead. And if one has to wait all night, with the temperature below the freezing point, clinging to an alpenstock to prevent oneself from rolling down, the situation is, to say the least, highly unpleasant. As I sat there wondering whether I or the cloud would hold out longest, I will confess that I sent up a petition for help to a Power stronger than I."

"I rejoice, young man, that the spirit—" commenced the catapult; but the black looks of the company squelched him, and the speaker went on.

"I had no sooner done so—and I am speaking the literal truth—than a sharp wind came down the mountain from behind my back, and in a moment had cut a lane—I say advisedly a lane—through the dense mist, and at its foot, some hundreds of feet below, I saw a cow-path which I had not noticed before the cloud closed in, *and the way to it down that lane was clear of precipice.* I need not say that I lost no time in availing myself of the—natural or supernatural?—help, and was soon at the cow-path, when the cloud closed in once more, *and did not lift the balance of the day.* But the path led me safely down."

"The hand of Providence, I cannot doubt," said the gentleman with the eye-glasses on his ear.

"More probably a gust of wind which would have blown without the aid of the petition," said a self-centred looking man, somewhat superciliously.

"That I cannot tell, sir," rejoined the American, "but this I know; that the petition went, and the gust of wind came, and I was, from my soul, thankful."

Again discussion raged—mildly—when a man with a look of honest doubt upon his face, said, "Presupposing that a Providence takes a hand in our affairs, in what a quandary—and I say it reverently—He must be placed, to judge whose petition to answer. Two men—of equal worth is His eyes, we will assume—pray, the one that upon the morrow it may rain, the other that it may not. Now, all things being equal, whose petition shall He grant? And grant one He must; for it either will not rain, or it will rain."

"Then why pray at all?" said the self-centred man, "for there must always be counter petitions of equal value as to merit and need."

"Perhaps for this reason, if for no other," said the friend of the man with the unused eye-glasses, "that the mere lifting of the soul to a strength greater than his, strengthens the petitioner. For we all naturally turn to a stronger for help; and the mere thought that there is One able to help, and who *may* help if it seems best to Him, may so buoy the soul with the hope born of that thought, that that very hope shall so strengthen the man, that he finds himself able to do that which before he could not."

CHAPTER XX.

OTTAWA.

ABOUT seven in the morning Chambly, a little town lying on a shallow, lake-like widening of the river, comes in sight, as does also the old stone fort, built by Capt. Jacques de Chambly in 1665, a relic of a by-gone, war-filled time, whose high walls are crumbling to the earth from whence their stones were taken, the gaping battlements and narrow, empty windows looking like the drooping jaw and half-closed eyes of some dead face. But the view, with the old fort in the foreground, and the Belleoeil Mountains in the distance across the whitened rapids of the river, is charming.

Swinging up to the wharf we land, having breakfasted on board, and proceed with our Catholic friends to call on their friend *Monsieur le Curé* at the *Presbytère*. After a pleasant chat we leave our polished, kindly host, who is *désolé* that we have breakfasted, and walk to the railway station, *en route* for Montreal.

Arriving at Montreal at nine, we are taken to a certain miraculous shrine in one of the churches; and our friends endeavor to persuade us that many cripples, having been carried from the neighboring towns on beds, have walked—nay, leaped—home, having been cured by being laid before it. What a fine thing is faith—or credulity!

Bidding good-bye to our friends, who return to Sorel, we go to the Windsor, and, holding a family conclave in the evening, determine to proceed to Ottawa.

There are two ways of reaching that capital from Montreal—by the eastern division of the Canadian Pacific Railway, or by steamer up the Lachine Canal to the mouth of the Ottawa, and thence up that river to Ottawa, the head of navigation. We choose the former that we may return by the latter, thus gaining the shoot of the Lachine rapids.

Breakfast at 7.30, partaken of in a manner that makes Dyspepsia smile, knowing that he can soon claim us for his own.

A cab, and a drive to the distant Hochelaga station, which we leave at 8.30. The train is composed of a parlor car, a couple of "first-class" cars (like our ordinary cars in the States), and a couple of "second-class" cars divided into two compartments, the forward being for smokers; and in these last cars the human frame is supposed to rest comfortably on the soft side of a cushionless board seat.

From our chairs at the parlor car windows, as the train bumps along over an exceedingly bad road-bed, we look out over a vast level plain, stretching away to the east and west as far as the sight can reach, and bounded on the north by a far-distant line of low and hazy hills, and showing patches of cultivated land, interspersed and separated by long reaches of young and old forest, the lighter green of the deciduous trees flecked here and there by the deeper hue of the pines and firs, while every now and then wild wastes appear, where the forest fires have done their work, and the trees, blackened and bare, lie as if some giant hand had dropped them like a bundle of jack-straws upon the earth.

We reach Calumet; and the low hills, which have been distant, are now near at hand. From the little station (wherein Uncle Robert and I gulp down beer and sandwiches, to the renewed delight and reinvigoration of the gnawing fiend), a little narrow-gauge railway runs to the Ottawa, a mile or so away, and to the flat ferry-boats, upon which passengers are poled to the other side, we are told.

Off again, the hills are soon passed by, and the seemingly dead-level country spreads away, wild and desolate and with but few habitations. After awhile we strike the Ottawa; and following it, sometimes near its broad stream, sometimes far away; crossing sleepy rivers and winding brooks that come creeping down to meet the larger river and thereby to find their way at last to that great storehouse for the clouds, the ocean, whence their very water may be carried back again to feed their parent springs; and passing vast lumber-yards and noisy, busy mills, about noon the Parliament towers appear in sight; we thunder over a long bridge, and are at Ottawa, so called from the Indian word "Ottawa," or "Ottawak," signifying "an ear," which name was given by the Indians to the tribe inhabiting this region, who were the only ones who *brushed back their hair*. Then we roll up a broad street,

lined with shops of fair degree, alight from the 'bus at the Russell House, and sit down to a good dinner.

The establishment of the seat of the General Dominion Government at Ottawa was dictated, it is said, by the august forefinger of the Queen. Both Montreal and Toronto clamored for it, and neither would give way. Therefore Her Majesty called for the map, and opening it at her quarrelsome provinces, espied the name "Ottawa" about midway between the two. The mere fact that Ottawa was but a collection of huts hundreds of miles away in an almost uninhabited forest, did not matter. The map was smooth and beautifully colored, and the region around Ottawa as smooth and beautiful as any—more so, in fact, for there were fewer nasty black marks scrawled over it. So the Imperial forefinger descended upon "Ottawa," and Ottawa was the capital!

Behold Jemima and me at the top of the tower of the Central Parliament Building, nearly two hundred feet from the ground. Hemming in the narrow circle upon which we stand, is an iron railing, strong and high, and fantastic in leaves and branches and scroll work, from which spring four ornamented heavy iron rods which, uniting above, support the flag-pole of the Dominion.

What a grand view! West, north and east the vast and level plain is circled by the horizon's curve, a perfect arc, softly, hazily, dreamily fringed by the unbroken forest's top that, to the north and east, melts, undistinguished, into the heaven's blue.

From the west huge billowy clouds are charging at us over the feathery line, swept on by the soft and gentle breeze in changing masses of deep, dark valleys, gleaming, snowy peaks, and impending gloom of scarce held summer shower. Through the forest plain the great river rolls from west to east, spreading in quiet, shining bays; narrowed by dark green woody points; spanned by the straight, trim railway bridge; crossed and banded by the lines of booms that seem like grey-backed monsters chained in silent rows; falling, in greatly sunken width, over the Chaudière Falls, whose distant roar comes faintly to the ear, and whose changing, ascending spray seems like the din and smoke of some far-away battle; sweeping by the long lines of mills and piled-up lumber like the houses and forts of a beleaguered town; and flowing calmly and majestically past the wood-fringed bluff on which our tower is built. The long lines of sawdust from the mills mark

current and channel and eddy; and on the broad bosom of the river float huge rafts of logs, with which ridiculously small tugs are struggling against the current toward the mills, wheezing and puffing and fussing like short fat men in a race. The whity-brown sawdust sweeps into an eddy and little bay which the projection of our bluff has made; a steamer at a wharf therein blows a shrill and echoing whistle, churns the water and sawdust into an ill-looking soup, rounds the curve of Nepean Point and, with the river, disappears from view.

Descending the 177 steps of our tower, we come to the ground floor, and look into the legislative halls, wherefrom the Dominion is governed partly after the manner of the mother country, in that there is a House of Commons, and partly after that of the United States, in that there is the superior body of the Senate, lords probably having been too scarce to form a House by themselves. The House, wherein the two hundred and odd Commons disport themselves after the manner of their kind, is a large, oblong, rectangular room, handsomely paneled and painted, with a partially arched roof, the centre of which is of glass to admit light, as there are no windows. The Senate Chamber, likewise oblong and rectangular, is somewhat smaller, but much handsomer, being surrounded by a gallery faced with columns of carved Canadian marble, and richly decorated and furnished. At one end stands the Governor General's chair of state, or throne, under a canopy projecting from the wall, and beside it stands another but somewhat smaller chair for the Princess Louise; for, as the Hibernian usher says, "it wouldn't have done to lave *her* out at all at all." (We were told that she wanted the larger chair, but that her desperate lord remarked that the line must be drawn somewhere, and resolutely took his rightful seat.) As we walk out the old usher asks us to examine the thickness and velvety texture of the carpet, observing: "There's no tobaccy spittin' on *that* cairpit, gintlemen, as I've haired there is wid yees in the States"—and crushed by this comparison we retire.

As I desire to examine some of the State records, we go over to the office of the Secretary of State, but find that the keeper of records has gone away on a three weeks' vacation and taken the key of the records' room with him, and that they are consequently inaccessible (!!). So we wander away through the little town,

and passing the water-works, look in. Here we find nine pumps, of which six are going, drawing their water from a flume from the river, and forcing it into the mains. And we are informed that when all the pumps are at work, a stream of water two hundred and sixty-four feet high can be thrown through a two and a half inch nozzle attached to a main near the pump house, and that, although they have two fire engines, they haven't used them in six years—that they tried them when they first got them, but the pressure from the mains drove the water clean through them.

Tramping along the wooden sidewalks, we reach the river, where miles of sawed lumber is piled high, and at length stand on the bridge at the foot of the Chaudière Falls, where the Ottawa pours over a ragged height of slaty rock, and falls about thirty feet, a vast mass of brownish water, into a seething cauldron of waves and foam and flying spray.

In one of the many mills we see a huge log, a forest king, hauled up a slippery inclined plane by hooks upon an endless chain, and, forced toward thirteen murderous-looking saws standing an inch apart, fall, in a twinkling almost, dismembered into white and civilized boards.

Returning in a "bob-tail" car, in which is a humped-back postman, resplendent in white helmet and blue frock coat with red trimmings and gold watch and chain and seal ring, we pass up Albert Street, whereon are some good stone houses, and by the market, catching a glimpse of the red brick armory in the distance, and at the end of the car line take a cab, and are driven to Rideau Hall, the Governor's residence, to see it in its summer greenery. And very prettily it lies in a grove formed from the natural forest, and near a little dell or ravine, on each side of which stands a wooden structure, an observation tower in summer and toboggan-slide for their high-and-mightinesses in winter. Around the house, which is a low, flat-roofed, grey stone building, with several like additions, apparently very comfortable as a residence but not at all imposing and almost devoid of architectural beauty, are several drives, some flower-beds, shrubbery, trimly kept lawns, and that is all.

As we drive away, I tell Jemima of my first visit in the winter of '79. I had taken a sleigh and driven down to see the house. To my astonishment my driver informed me that if I would be

driven through the grounds I must register my name at the house. As to drive through the grounds was the only way to obtain any view of the house, I consented to place my autograph on record for the delectation of any crowned head, and was accordingly driven through the twice aforementioned grounds to the mansion, whence the Princess had, a short time before, departed to visit her royal mamma in London, leaving her noble husband to keep house. Alighting as I was bidden at the front door (I use the word advisedly, for it can hardly be called an "entrance"), which was guarded by a sentinel pacing his beat on a narrow wooden path-way, I duly rang the bell, when an ancient Hibernian of the male persuasion and, I regret to say, extremely dirty, with an equally dirty cap upon his disheveled locks, opened the door.

To him I made known the impression under which I labored as to my autograph, and inquired if there was a book kept for that purpose. "An' sure I belave there is, sur; and if ye'll just be afther steppin' in fur a minit, I'll thry to foind it, sur." Therewith he ushered me into a sort of small, square hall, painted and grained in oak, from which a few steps led up to the apparent level of the main floor and hall, which last terminated at the open door of a handsomely furnished apartment, seeming to be the parlor or reception-room, the most prominent object in which appeared to be a bust of the Marquis upon an ebony pedestal near the door. At the left, a pair of stairs ascended apparently to the second story, and at their foot was an ordinary sheet-iron stove, partly surrounded by a galvanized sheet-iron screen (also ordinary), to protect the banisters from the heat; and fastened against the wall, about the height of a man's breast, was a small desk.

Upon this desk my ancient guide evidently expected to see the book of his search; but finding its surface empty, and an inspection of its interior and under portion being equally fruitless, he essayed to discover it somewhere around the hall, with like ill-success. During his manœuvres I had stood quietly patient and much amused, but now began to stimulate his flagging ardor and urge the production of the tome. But soon he gave up in despair, and astonished me by saying, "Sure, sur, its mesilf that can't foind it. But if ye'd koindly be afther steppin' out again and ringin' the bell, belike there'll someone else come as 'll give yees the book." Yielding perforce to his request, I was "afther steppin' out," and

he with me; when, after carefully closing the door behind us and ringing the bell, he left me to my fate, and trotted away around the corner. Having enjoyed the nipping cold for a moment or two without any apparent result from said ringing, meanwhile calmly gazing upon the sentinel who paced his beat, presenting to me alternately an impassive back and equally impassive face, I decided that no crowned head should be favored with my signature, however much he or she might pine for it; and jumping into my waiting sleigh, finished my inspection of the grounds and of the outside of the house, and drove away.

"How ridiculous!" said Jemima. "Do you suppose the Governor knew of it?"

"No," I replied, "I guess he didn't. He probably wasn't at home; or if he was, he was economizing."

We left our cab, after reaching the town again, and walked toward the Russell House. On the way we noticed quite an ornate church, over the main door of which was carved, "My house shall be called the house of prayer."

"'But ye have made it a den of thieves'?" said Jemima under her breath, with a quizzical look at three ancient and exceedingly shrewd-looking men, evidently "pillars," who were just then coming out of the vestry-room.

As she spoke, a cart drove by, with this legend painted in large letters on the side: "TO HIRE. *Holiness unto the Lord.* Judas Jones, Carman."*

"Rather pat!" I exclaimed.

"Well, it is, rather," she said. "Now I wonder how much more than other carmen he charges, and whether he ever carries a load for a poor woman for nothing?"

"As to the first, probably double, when he gets the chance," I replied; "and as to the second, a big, big no."

When we arrived at the hotel we found the others there before us, and were berated for having wandered off alone:—but we didn't mind.

When I had reached our room late that night (for we had all gone to the theatre and had a supper afterward), and, commencing to undress, was beginning to wonder what had become of Jemima,

*True, except the name. AUTHOR.

the door opened softly and she stole in on tip-toe, with her finger to her lips and a laugh struggling behind their closed portal; when, having as softly closed the door, she sank down on a chair and, with her face in her hands, swayed backward and forward in a gale of merriment.

“What on earth is the matter?” I asked.

“Oh John—oh, you should have seen his face—and she cried over the bug too—oh, it was too funny—oh, I’ve laughed myself quite crooked—” straightening her lithe form with an effort—“I never—saw any—thing like it—in—my life!”

“Well, my love, if you’ll just stop wobbling for an instant, and tell me, so that I can wobble too,” I said, “I’ll be ever so grateful.”

“I will—just a minute—oh-h-h—*there!* You know I was coming up after you, when, just ahead of me, I saw Aunt Eunice and the Professor going up too. The lights were low, and the stair-carpet thick. He began to go up first; then he fell back beside her; then he helped her up by her elbow, and then by her arm. Then he dropped her arm and began to fumble over toward the other side of her waist; and just as he reached it, she pushed his hand away, and they reached our hall. Then he took her hand, and they walked toward her door; and all the time they said never a word; and I was sitting on the stairs with my eyes just above the hall floor, looking through the banisters. Then he took her other hand and looked down at her, and she looked up at him. And then—oh John, wasn’t it dreadful—and at her age too!—he just put both arms around her waist and kissed her!”

“Dreadful—at her age!” I said, laughing.

“But John, he’d no sooner kissed her—oh, it was too funny!” and the wobbling recommenced.

“*Will* you stop and go on?” I shouted—in a whisper.

“If I stop I can’t go on, you goose, you dear old gander!”—settling herself comfortably on my lap. “Well, he’d no sooner kissed her—and he kissed her *hard*, too—I wish you’d stop! I’m not going to Banbury Cross—*John!* that was harder than he kissed her, I know—he’d no sooner kissed her——”

“You’ve said that three times,” I remarked.

“Sir! Oh, you sweet!”—with a kiss on my lips between her two soft hands—“*he’d no sooner kissed her*”—emphasizing each

word with a tap on my nose with her knuckles—"than he jumped back as though he'd been stabbed—and I guess his feelings were, poor man—and there, on his coat, was one of the Picketeds, *mashed!*"—in a tragic tone, and with a burst of laughter. "Oh my! oh my!—will *you* stop *wobbling*, sir? And when she saw what had happened she actually began to cry, and carefully wiped the bug off with her handkerchief; and I guess the Professor must have cried too, for she wiped his eyes——"

"With the same handkerchief?"

"With the same handkerchief, and then he kissed her again—sidewise—and they parted."

"Then I suppose they're engaged."

"Suppose? Why of course they are! You don't think she'd let him kiss her if they weren't?"

"No—I presume—no—oh, certainly not—certainly not! But we must keep their secret."

"Why, of course, dear. You don't suppose I'd tell?"

"No, my love, I know you wouldn't."

CHAPTER XXI.

STEAMER AGAIN, AND GRAVEYARD VAGARIES.

THE morrow saw us steaming down the Ottawa in company with the baskets, edibles, children, brass band, noise and confusion attending an excursion going part way; and saw likewise, thank heaven! said concomitants to said excursion disembark, leaving us room and orange peel and peanut shells.

The grand river flowed through the level country, with here and there a mighty curve of its wide waters, laving the roots of mile after mile of the forest that lovingly fringed its banks; sweeping placidly by the projecting wharves and beached boats of sleepy hamlets, and broadening into lakes that shimmered beneath the shining sun; while now and then the steamer threw out its hawsers, like sinewy arms, and brought itself to, with a thud and a shock, at some waiting dock, to churn off again down the tide. And so, hour after hour.

Uncle Robert and I were sitting on the forward deck after dinner, smoking, and Jemima was there too—for I am gratefully happy to say that she likes, really likes, tobacco smoke, and at that time assured me that I should smoke all over our house, when we had one, and that no curtains should come between me and my happiness: and she has kept her word, dear wife that she is.

Uncle Robert, Jemima and I, I say, were on the forward deck; and near us gradually gathered a little knot of men, likewise smoking.

To Uncle Robert turned one of them, a man clad in a short sack coat, tightly buttoned up, except at the top button, where it was left open, evidently to show his huge black and red cravat slipped through an enormous diamond (?) cluster ring, and gold insignium of some society pinned high up on his vest lapel, and said, originally, "Fine day, sir!"

"Very fine," replied Uncle Robert, without enthusiasm.

"Fine view, sir!" continued he, unabashed, waving his gold eye-glasses, held between the thumb and forefinger of his brand

new yellow gloves, toward the shore, and tilting his shiny, very-bell-crowned hat a little further on one side.

"Very fine," again replied Uncle Robert, slightly turning his back.

"Good country for consumptives, I should think," he went on, apparently not noticing the turn; and then, without stopping, and addressing the company in a benign and general way, "reminds me of an order I got for a gravestone——"

"You don't deal in gravestones, sir?" said a man next to him. "Your dress——"

"Isn't melancholy enough?" replied the bell-crowned, turning his little, sharp eyes toward him with a satisfied smile. "No, sir, not *now*. I'm traveling for pleasure now, sir, and I dress accordingly, sir; but when I'm at home I mourn—dress in mourning, sir, I mean—as that's more soothing to the relicts and executors—it don't make so much difference with the heirs. As I was saying, I got an order for a gravestone from a nice young man who was going off on a cough—galloping consumption, you know—and he picked out his style from the drawings I took him. A few days after I took the same drawings to a nice young lady who was going the same way, but she couldn't decide on anything. Then I showed her the young man's style, and the drawings for his lettering. They pleased her, and she asked his address, in a casual sort of way. Well, sir, I got the two stones ready according to directions, and waited and waited for orders to set 'em up, till I got tired. Then I thought I'd call on the young man to see how soon he'd be ready. What do you think, sir? There was that young woman nursing that young man, and both of 'em getting well! They invited me to their wedding six months afterwards, but I didn't go, for I thought they'd treated me rather shabbily. For though they paid me for the stones, they had 'em cut down into doorsteps for their new house, and so I never could use 'em as ads."

"That was hard lines," said his neighbor. "And speaking of couples, I had two coffins to make——"

"And you're an undertaker?" said the gravestone man in his turn. "Happy to meet you, sir! What's your place?"

"Albany," replied the undertaker.

"And Troy's mine," said the other. "Hope we may be mutually beneficial. As you were saying, sir?"

“As I was saying,” said the man of graves, nodding with a knowing smile to the man of stones, “I had two coffins to make for two fianceys—engaged, you know—who died within a day of each other—his death killed her, they said—and it was her orders before she died that they should both be buried in one grave with their hands clasped. How to do it the relations didn’t know, but they said they had promised that it should be done, and so done it must be. So they left it to me. At first I thought of putting ’em in one coffin side by side, but I measured and found they wouldn’t go into the hearse. So I made two coffins, with sliding panels in one side—his right, hers left.

“When they were laid out in the parlor, there they were, hand in hand, the hands resting on an ‘At Rest’ on a stool. Then when we hearsed ’em, we put in the arms and slid back the panels. When we got to the grave, which was dug for two, we lowered ’em side by side; opened the panels; clasped their hands on the ‘At Rest’ again, and, after the ceremonies, covered ’em up.”

“He talks as if he were telling about a circus!” said Jemima to me; and flashing an indignant look at the narrator, she stalked into the cabin.

There was a man sitting near the speaker who, at the word “fiancey” had sighed aubibly. His immense beard swept his threadbare coat which was worn into scallops at the sleeves, while his lanky, straight hair, of as dead a brown as pea-brush, hung down over his leathern skin.

“Gentlemen, I was a fiancey once!” and as he said it he removed his hat, exposing a bald head, over which his hair was twisted into a topknot tied with a shoe-lacing.

Every one looked at him, and tried not to smile.

“Yes,” he continued, “and these stories of graveyards have reminded me of her.”

“We’re sorry to have disturbed your feelings, sir,” said the undertaker. “I suppose she laid out handsome?”

“Not at all, sir,” replied he, with a great sigh, “not at all. I’ve no doubt she would have if she’d died; but she didn’t. It was the graveyard. When I was engaged to her, her folks told me never to go to the family plot with her, for if I did, we’d be sure to quarrel and part. So I declined several times. But one Sunday she said she must go look at her father’s grave, and

she asked me to go along. Without thinking, I said yes, and we went. While we stood reading his monument she said, 'George, have you ever heard the epitaph I mean to have?'

" 'No, my duck,' I replied—for I was naturally affectionate, you know—I never have. What is it?'

" 'It's a little thing of my own,' she said, with a shy kind of smile; 'it's this:

I've gone to dust
As I knew I must.
But I'll upward jump
At the sound of the trump.

Don't you think it's pretty, and real religious?'

" 'Well, M'ria,' I said, 'I can't say as I do. It don't hardly strike me that way. Seems to me you might just as well say

I've up and dusted,
For my life is busted.
But the grave I'll jump it
At the sound of the trumpet.

or

But I'll be a jumper,
And a heavenward stumper.'

"Well, gentlemen, do you know, she got real mad at my little joke. Said I had no feeling—no soul for poetry, and we argued the thing all the way home. On the doorstep she said I needn't call again until she wrote to me. In a day or two I got a letter saying that she thought that as our ideas were so very different, she didn't think we could agree in life, and that we had better part: that there was something about that graveyard that she couldn't understand, as I was the fifth it had separated her from. And I never saw her again;" and once more he sighed.

The underputter of the dead, and the celebrator of them after they were put under, both commiserated him, when the latter said, "Well, sir, I can tell you of an epitaph that made more trouble than that, for the row came after they were married. There was a young man in my town who had struck it rich in speculating in coffins—bought out the stock of a factory at Sheriff's

sale, and jobbed 'em out at a cent per cent. profit. Guess you know him?"—to the undertaker.

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I know him. Sold me a lot of large sizes—said he closed 'em out to me cheap, as there was more call for smalls and mediums. They wasn't cheap, though, for they was so badly put up that, when I put a two hundred party in one, it all fell apart right in the parlor, and made me no end of bother, besides bringing the widow to."

"Thought you knew him," said the gravestone man. "Well, he would have a stone cut in his lifetime—said he wanted to superintend it himself. And I should think he ought to, for it was the queerest thing I ever had ordered. Guess he must have been something of a spiritualist. It was cut like an over-stuffed arm-chair, tufts and buttons and fringe and all. And on the inside of the back—front part, you know—he had, 'This is my seat from midnight till cock-crowing. At all other times it is yours.'"

"What did he mean by that?" said the rejected.

"I believe he'd an idea he'd sit there fine nights after he was a ghost. Well, his wife came to see it, and she said she wanted one like it. He said he couldn't afford two. Then she said he must have the inscription changed to 'This is *our* seat from midnight till cock-crowing.' He said he wouldn't do that, for it would spoil the effect, for anybody could see that two couldn't sit comfortably in that chair; and besides he preferred to sit alone. Well, sir, that was the beginning, I heard, and they kept it up till she got a divorce on the ground of cruel and barbarous treatment—swore he wouldn't give her a chair to sit upon, though she was careful not to say where; and as he didn't appear to defend, the judge never knew the truth."

Uncle Robert and I went aft after that.

CHAPTER XXII.

EXCITING—To Us.

AND now the river widens into the Lac des Deux Montagnes, and we steam along its western shore, pass through the railway bridge at Vaudreuil and, skirting the Isle Perrot, enter the St. Lawrence and the Lac St. Louis. Soon the village of Lachine, at the head of the Lachine Canal, comes into view on the northern shore, and the Indian village of Caughnawaga on the southern, and we know that we are nearing the Lachine Rapids; and there is a scramble for seats at the bow, where we have already secured our places.

The river narrows. The current begins to flow smooth and strong. See, ahead, that first dip, like a great, shining terrace. We involuntarily hold our breath as the steamer rushes toward it, and glance back at the Indian pilot at the wheel, whose strong, set face reassures us. Now an inclination forward, an added rush, a plunge, and we are in the rapids. The waters swirl and boil on every side; and the great eddies lash the oncoming tide into foam. The black and shining faces of the rocks appear and disappear, like lurking monsters hungering for our lives. The channel narrows, and the swiftly rushing stream now breaks in jets of foamy spray, now flows in long-drawn furrows of a shining blue, now swirls in depths of livid green. The steamer rolls and labors. Another plunge, and right ahead looms up a black and jagged rock, past which the river flows in one vast sweep that ever and anon lays bare its cruel, dripping sides down toward the depths. The current sucks us to this last rush of all. The steamer shivers and the heart stands still, as we flash past the ragged teeth that wait to tear us, but just miss their prey—and float out smoothly on the shining bosom of the resting stream.

We ran up alongside the larger steamer for Quebec, and we and a few other passengers were transferred, bag and baggage, into its cavernous depths.

Every one going aboard, and every one not going warned off by an intermixture of bell and yell, and we were once more on our

way toward the sea. Apparently the self-same people were on board that had gone with us to Sorel, for there was the same dancing, the same singing, and the same chaffering over travelers' unecessaries. Likewise were there the same manillas and usquebaugh for Uncle Robert and me.

Again Sorel's baleful eyes came into view; again appeared the buildings with but one visible wall; again the hawser lines and gang-planks sprang out, and we stood on the deck and chatted with the Dés and the Efffs, whom we had recognized in the crowd and energetically hailed.

The last good-bye had been said; the last waving handkerchief had disappeared in the gloom; the lights upon the wharf lessened, dimmed and disappeared, and, throbbing through the night, the steamer rushed upon its way. The boat's company disappeared one by one, and soon Aunt Hepzibah, Aunt Eunice and Victorine, and the Professor followed, and Uncle Robert, Jemima and I were left chatting near the piano, abaft of the companion-way. And near us were a few scattered groups, like us chatting merrily, or drowsily considering the advisability of bed.

"What is that?" exclaimed Jemima, as a report like a rifle crack echoed through the silent night.

The answer came. The crash of wood—a tearing, rending sound; the crash of glass; the snap of parting beams, and through the partition around the machinery, snapping timbers as if they had been straws, and shivering the great mirror at the head of the companion-way, the huge connecting-rod fell like an arm of death. Down through the cabin's ceiling; cutting through railing and piano as with a knife; down through a group bound hand and foot by fear; down through the deck; down through the sleeping women underneath; down to the lowest hold it fell, where, driven by the revolving wheels, it tore at the resisting planks like a monster in its death agony.

And now, through the crash of wood and clang of steel, arose the human cry. The shrieks of women; the cries of men; the moans of the dying and the wailing for the dead. And still the monster underneath tore at the planks, and Death by Drowning stared the living in the face.

At the first crash Uncle Robert and I had seized Jemima and dragged her toward the state-room doors. And before our very

faces fell that awful arm ; before our very faces fell upon that merry group so near to us, and carried mangled flesh and broken bones and dying shrieks down to the deck below, to mingle with other mangled flesh and other broken bones and other dying shrieks, and all to fall together down to that lowest hold, to be tossed back and forth by the monster in its death agony.

It was horrible!

We burst open the door of the state-room nearest to us and fled inside, for the floor of the cabin was falling fast. Then through the window we and the occupants escaped to the deck, which was already full of frightened people in all stages of undress.

The thrash and tear of the connecting-rod below soon ceased, the wheels coming to a stand-still as the steamer gradually lost her headway and at length drifted on the river. We fastened a life preserver around Jemima, and, putting her in what seemed to be a safe place by the railing at the stern, at her earnest entreaty I went with Uncle Robert to endeavor to find the others. Their state-rooms were on the opposite side of the boat, and as it was impossible to make our way along the narrow, crowded deck, we went back through the state-room through which we had come, and emerged into the after-cabin. What an awful sight it was! What perfect chaos! The floor clung to the beams underneath the state-room doors, here a level, jagged projection, there hanging like a ragged cloth. And gaping down the midst, almost to the stern doors, was an horrible hole, a ragged wound, from whose dark depths the cries and moans and shouts arose as if from an abode of the damned. And over all was shed but the light from two or three lamps that the descending rod had spared. A hell half lighted!

Painfully creeping over the tottering remnants of the floor, we made our way forward to the forward cabin, which was unharmed. There we found, among the rest, the sought: Aunt Hepzibah on her knees, commanding the Lord to save her; Aunt Eunice in a dead faint, presided over by the Professor, imploring her to speak to him, and Victorine dancing up and down in an ecstasy of terror, calling upon *Monsieur Jones*, *Boloos*, *mon ange*, *la vie de mon coeur*, to come her to conserve. But alas, Bolus was in the men's cabin underneath, and could not hear.

Finding them safe, I left Uncle Robert with them, and dashed back for Jemima. Just then from far below arose a cry that swelled above shriek, wail and moan, and made the stoutest heart stand still. "She's sinking! Save yourselves!" and with the cry the steamer slowly settled toward the stern.

Then what an awful rush, what a mad rush for the bow! From the stern deck, along the narrow decks outside the state-rooms, creeping over the broken remnants of the after-cabin floor, men trampling over women, and women screaming for their children, they came. I fought against the human tide; was thrown down and trampled; rose again and again fought on, a mad and frenzied fight to reach the life that was dearer to me than my own. Men cursed me and beat me back; women clutched at me in the throng; but still I struggled on. Inch by inch I fought my way. The crowd was thinning; but a few frantic stragglers rushing toward the bow, and over an empty deck I flew, calling my wife's name in an agony of despair. And all the while, with shiver and groan, as if itself a dying life, the steamer was slowly sinking from the black night into the blacker water.

"Jemima! Jemima!" but there was no answering voice. I reached the railing where I had left her. Great God! it was gone—torn from its sockets and hanging down into the water that was now almost on a level with the deck.

"Jemima! Jemima!" Is that her voice answering me? "Jemima! Where are you?" It is her voice, oh, thank God, it is! "Here, John! Oh, come quick!"

I rushed toward her voice. I saw a dark form lying on the deck upon its outer edge. I threw myself on my knees beside her. "Oh, my love, I have found you! Are you hurt? You'll fall overboard!" and I threw my arms around her to drag her back.

"Oh, John, don't! I'll lose my hold!" And then I found—believe it or not as you will—I found that my wife, my pretty, child-like wife, was patiently trying to save another's life at the risk of her own. Lying flat upon the deck, her arm wound round a railing post yet firm, she was bending far over the side, holding by the wrist a child whose moans showed that it was still alive.

I stretched myself beside her and, grasping the post, felt down her arm until I reached the child; when, seizing its slender arm, I drew it gently to the deck, and laid it down beside my wife.

"It is safe, thank God!" but as I drew Jemima back to the safety of the deck, she did not answer, for she had fainted.

At last I brought her to. Meanwhile the water had stopped rising, and the steamer was evidently aground. Her deck was sloping sharply toward the stern, and she had listed, so that we three were thrown against, but were held safe by the netting of the remaining railing. The dawn began to glimmer in the east, and a faint light showed the water, grey and indistinct. It brightened—and as my wife opened her eyes, they met mine.

Why write the rapture of two new-found lives, by each of whom the other is held dearer than its own? Search your own heart—and in the glad cry, the sob of joy, the tears of utter thankfulness, read what we felt when our lips pressed living lips, not dead.

I turned toward the child—for our own is always first—and found it lying—dead? No, again thank God! not dead, but quietly asleep, with its pretty head upon its little arm! I drew it toward us gently, and Jemima lifted its head upon her lap.

As I held her in my arms, waiting until day should fairly break—for all immediate danger was passed, and I knew we were safer where we were, for the present, out of the crush—she told me what had happened after I left her. The crush on the deck had become greater and greater, until the pressure on the railing growing more than it could bear, it suddenly parted not far from her; was torn away quite up to her, and many were precipitated into the water—whence, alas! they never came. "Oh, John," she said, shuddering, "I shall never forget the awful cry they gave as they went over into the black water! I threw myself on the deck, or was thrown down, I don't know which, and grasped that post—you dear old post, you!"—looking at it fondly—"when just then this pretty child was pushed overboard right over me. Its little frightened cry went straight to my heart, and I grasped its dress as it fell, holding myself from going too by that good post. I felt the dress beginning to tear, and so I called to it as gently as I could, so as not to frighten it more, to take hold of my hand;

and, brave little woman that it is!"—stroking its curly hair—"she reached up her two little hands and clasped mine. And as I felt her soft little fingers close around mine, I vowed I would not let go my hold till death should make me. So I changed my hold to her wrist. And I felt the steamer going down and down, and heard the water coming nearer and nearer, and all the people left me, and I began to grow faint, and to have strange, far-away dreams; when I heard you calling, and then you came; and I didn't know anything more till I saw your dear eyes looking into mine."

And again, as by the pines, I thanked God in my heart that such a soul belonged to me.

The dawn having now fairly come, I lifted the child, who awoke smiling, in my arms, and, with Jemima, was about to climb forward, when who should appear, sliding down the deck, but Uncle Robert, God bless him! Jemima threw her arms around his neck and kissed him, while I promised an explanation of why we were alive later, and we all climbed up the side deck, by the help of the railing, as far as the paddle-box, where we crawled through a state-room window, and so reached the forward cabin. The passengers were resting against the state-room walls and the stationary chairs and settees, and Uncle Robert led us to the rest of our party. And then what laughing and crying and embracing there was! for they had almost given us up for dead. But, alas! some were weeping and wailing for those they knew were dead.

Just then a shriek rang through the cabin, rousing us all, although so used to cries of horror and pain. But this was no cry of pain. For calling "Birdie! Birdie! oh my Birdie!" a young mother rushed up the steep cabin floor; fell, rose, and struggling on, fell on her knees beside me as I sat, and tearing the child from my arms, smothered it with kisses, crying, "oh my Birdie! Mamma's own!" in an agony of joy. Then suddenly releasing the child, she threw her arms around my neck, calling me the savior of her child, and pressed one heartfelt kiss upon my lips. Then when I told her that the thanks were my wife's, not mine, it was Jemima's neck that was encircled, and on her sympathetic bosom and in her arms the mother sobbed away the grief that had been hers through so many anguished hours. (Jemima and I

receive, upon every anniversary of that day, some lovely token from that grateful heart, and with it a message more lovely than the gift.)

Then Uncle Robert and I—and his coolness and bravery during the dreadful night had been, I heard, beyond all praise—climbed down through a hole that had been cut in the floor—for the companion-way was not only smashed, but under water—to see what we could do.

On the forward lower deck we found the crew and the second and third class passengers, and many of the men of the first class, who had first cut the hole in the floor, and then climbed down like ourselves. And there we likewise found Bolus, his imperturbability somewhat under the weather, but rapidly recovering; otherwise unharmed. He grasped my proffered hand with respectful cordiality; expressed his (not too exuberant) delight at our safety, and intimated that he thought he'd 'ad enough of Hamerican steamboat travel, leastways he preferred that on the Thames. Uncle Robert told me he was almost the first that clambered up into the cabin, where, after a cursory view of the safety of the party in general, he had devoted himself to quieting the nerves of Victorine in particular.

Then I learned what, as I had supposed, was the cause of the accident. The connecting-rod—the great steel rod connecting the wheels with the walking-beam—had broken at the “fork,” near the walking-beam, and on the up-stroke, when it was lifted to its highest point, and then had fallen aft, crushing through the hurricane deck, the saloon deck, the women's cabin underneath, and into the hold. The revolutions of the wheels (about ten), caused by the way of the vessel, had driven it backward and forward as it lay, tearing a hole in the bottom of the boat; when she filled at the stern, and would have gone entirely down, if she had not been headed by the pilot, with wonderful presence of mind, toward shore, and drifted upon it, where she now lay, with her bow well out of water, but her stern sunk nearly to the level of the saloon deck.

As the vessel had settled astern, the freight had slipped down the deck; carried away the partition dividing the smoking-room and women's cabin from the forward deck, and was now mostly under water, lying upon the bodies of those killed by the rod, the

survivors having clambered forward; for all communication with the saloon deck had been cut off by the smashing of the companion-way.

As we were talking, a whistle was heard, and Uncle Robert and I climbed up with the others, and we all swarmed out on deck. Bearing down toward us was a steamer from Quebec; and as she came, her whistle answered our cheers. Soon she was alongside, and gang-planks were stretched to our decks, and all our passengers were transferred; some to return up the river home, and the rest to return as far as Sorel, to await the night's steamer down: and among these, some—poor unfortunates!—to await the recovery of their dead.

Did I say all were transferred? All but one, and she a bride or but a few days. For she had been one of that merry group, and her husband had gone down with that cruel arm of Death into that lowest hold. She refused to leave, but haunted that awful hole, the ghost of a dead happiness.

Our baggage, except what we had in our valises, which was sufficient, luckily, to last us home, was gone—lying soaking in the drowned baggage-room. So we dismissed it (externally) from our minds, having our baggage checks as bases for future damage claims, and departed, truly thankful to have, if not *terra firma*, at least *navis firma* underneath our feet; and likewise truly thankful that we were not among those moaning on the way.

Arrived at Sorel, we were, for our particular coterie, heroes and objects of interest; and we comparatively rested and almost grew rosy again upon the repeated narration of the disaster.

At eleven o'clock that night we once more embarked at Sorel's lamplighted wharf, and steamed in confidence over the bosom of that river which had so nearly swallowed us up, and would do it again, and entirely, if it could.

CHAPTER XXIII.

QUEBEC, AND THE FALLS OF MONTMORENCY.

THE god of day, like a spirit of good, slowly opens his wings upon a world freed from night, and through the mists and shadows of the dark, departing hours, greyly lights up field and flood. The eastern horizon brightens into warmer glow; the shining glory from around the sun-god's brow spreads through the light and level clouds above his head; his beaming face laughs over the edge of the revolving earth; the little, coquettish waves dimple and play beneath his silvery smile; the trees that crown the bluffs on either hand tremble with joy through all their leaves at the kiss and the breath of the day, which comes, is here, and the broad bosom of the river heaves and the landscape smiles with brightest glow, as the now risen lord of light sips the dew from grass and flowers, from waving blades of corn and tremulous leaves, and with his burning hand upon the river's breast sweeps off the shrouding mists of night.

The steamer plows through the laughing waves that tumble against her white and sturdy sides, spring up before her prow in merry spray, clamber upon her flying wheels and madly rush away in whirling, dancing foam.

Ahead, a mound grows from the water's edge; rises, of hazy blue; the surface roughens into roofs and spires; the castle crowns its precipice, and before us lies Quebec. The whistle sounds; the engine slows and stops, and we slide over the smooth water until, with a bump and a shock, the great steamer is at the wharf.

What a hurry and a scurry! And we are hurried and our baggage scurried out upon the dock. We pass on to a market square—which we afterwards find is almost the only level place in the town—on one side of which stands the low, granite custom-house, while on the other two are lofty warehouses. Amid a din of hackmen, we choose one of several 'busses—that of the St. Louis Hotel—which starting, soon leaves the level and begins to climb a winding and exceedingly steep street which, following a

sort of ravine in the bluff on which the town is built, leads up from the river. About half-way up the 'bus almost stops, and it is nip and tuck whether the horses will succeed in dragging up the heavy load, or whether we shall roll backward, to the dissolution of the 'bus and ourselves. But an immense amount of lashing and yelling so animates the poor beasts, that we safely reach the hotel.

Quebec lies on a high ridge which, projecting into the river from its northern shore, is called Cape Diamond. Upon the extreme point and highest part of this ridge the Castle of St. Louis stands, crowning a precipice over three hundred feet high, at the foot of which the river flows; a narrow street and a line of wharves utilizing the scanty beach and the deep channel. From the small level space at the eastern end of this water street, where is the market square above mentioned and where Champlain first built his *habitation*, the city spreads east along the more level shore, and rounds north and west up toward the castle wherever foothold can be found, and so on further north and west out toward the Plains or Heights of Abraham, the broad, bare and level top of the ridge, which is almost precipitous on the western side. That part of the city which lies upon the higher ground, and is the more ancient, is called the Upper Town, and around this runs the old wall or rampart, battlemented and crowned by cannon whose black throats open down upon the Lower (and newer) Town, which spreads away over the level lands toward the east. To pen such a picture of the city that the mind can view it at a glance, is almost impossible; for such a mixture is there of ragged precipice, of clinging, stone-built houses, of huge walls supporting terraces, of steep and winding streets, of battlemented ramparts, of glistening, tin-covered spires, and of castle frowning over all, that no concise word-painting can do justice to the whole.

Even Aunt Hepzibah's grim nerve has been shattered by the excitement and strain of the accident, while Aunt Eunice is a perfect wreck. Jemima, dear child, has, so to speak, come up smiling. But rest for all is prescribed, and so the entire day is given up to that excellent but wearying occupation. The Professor devotes himself to Aunt Eunice with an assiduity born of the uncertainty of his would-be matrimonial position (or so it seems to us), while Uncle Robert devotes himself, somewhat, to the cup which cheers

and, in sufficient numbers, will inebriate, the doses being, however, pleasanter than an equal quantity of his wife: but the occasion would seem to demand some stimulant. I spend the time in persuading Jemima to lie down and go to sleep, and in absenting my unwilling self from her side, in the hope (which is continually proved to be vain by her constant reappearance) that she will obey; during which absenting I occasionally join Uncle Robert in mild conviviality. And so the day wears on and away, until forced rest is supplanted by willing.

The morning is again bright and clear, and the sun fairly winks at us from glistening roofs and spires, through the open windows of our room.

"Impertinence!" cries Jemima, as she lies bathed in the light from his broad face. "Pull down the shade, John, and serve him right by shutting him out! The idea, looking into a lady's room!"

But she and the sun are the best of friends as we stroll out after our breakfast for a sight-see of the town. For the others have not yet appeared, and we have stolen away, like children from school, to revel in this new world alone.

On the opposite side of the street, and at the corner of a very crooked street—but no street here is even approximately straight—stands a little, one-and-a-half-story house, with white, stuccoed walls and high, steep, shingled roof, wherein a colored brother has established his "studio," wherefrom he advertises himself to the world as "Physiognomical Hair Cutter, Capillary Abridger, and Cranium Manipulator." And in the self-same room in which this brother snips and clips and shaves and garrulously entertains his customers, the great Montcalm, in the years gone by, lay a-dying—died. Yes, to this little house, his headquarters, from the bloody Plains of Abraham, he was carried; and in his life-blood was written a history of brave defense which shall never fade.

Winding down the street we come to a sort of square, whose slope is roughly paved with cobble-stones, except where, in short parallel lines, flag-stones have been laid, upon which may stand the wheels of sundry cabs and coaches, waiting to be hired. Upon one side of this square is a great wall, holding up a part of the square itself, and going down to the depths. On another, face some of the principal shops, while on another stands the stone

French Cathedral, consecrated in 1666, whose queer, irregular front is supported by two towers, one square and looking as if it were but half finished; the other like three cupolas, decreasing in size, piled one on the other, and all three, almost from the ground up, covered with bright, unpainted tin, and surmounted with an iron cross in open work, which bears on its top a long-tailed and very movable cock. We inspect the interior, which we find to be handsome, especially the chancel, which is said to have been modeled after that of St. Peter's at Rome.

Near the Cathedral is the principal store for furs and Indian goods; and here we see furs of all kinds and qualities, snow-shoes, toboggans, wampum work, Indian odds and ends, and moccasins *ab libitum*. Concerning these last, we learn that those made of coarse, fibrous buffalo hide are the worst; part buffalo and part moose the next; all moose the next; and the fine white caribou the best and most durable. Of these last I instantly order two pairs—one for myself, and one to be much worked in bright-colored wampum, fine, soft and of dainty shape and size, not for myself. Price \$2 per pair.

"Oh dear," says Jemima, as she extracts her pocket-book from the depths of her pocket in some incomprehensible part of her dress, "this is the gookiest old pocket-book that ever was, it"—sadly, gazing at the attenuated contents—"never will hold, to keep, you know, any money at all. I don't know how it is"—confidentially—"but all the money I put there seems to take feet to itself and walk off." And then she pays for a pair of miniature snow shoes, and looks longingly at a superb bear-skin hanging upon the wall. (That bear-skin is now upon our library floor.)

"John," she says, with comic sadness, "I was born with the taste of a gold spoon in my mouth; but only the taste, not the spoon."

"But perhaps," I say, "the spoon will follow the taste."

"Ah," she replies, "but it's so hard to quell a present need by the hope of a future help!"

"That's true," I answer, as we walk out, "but console yourself; none but the poor—that's I—deserve the fair—that's you—a recompense for their poverty; and I've got what I deserve."

"Egotist!" she cries gaily. "Deserve indeed! What? Purchase me with your small hoard which——"

"Which will help to keep up our scanty fire under our modest pot," I interrupt.

"You may well say modest," she says, with half-a-dozen decided little nods, "for modest it will be, when we get one. You know, John"—with a quizzical puckering of her little mouth—"I've commenced to keep an account. But so many childish little items appear, that it looks like a kindergarten, and I *cannot* keep it in any kind of order."

I roar.

Descending the street upon which the 'bus and we came so near to our respective deaths, we reach, branching down from it, the Rue Petit Champlain. What a street! So steep that nothing but a goat could successfully pass up and down it, and therefore covered by, and now composed of, a long succession of wooden steps, broken by frequent landings or platforms. So narrow that the signs which hang out over the petty shops which line it—banners of the purse-conquering army—almost touch each other—almost wage the civil war which their respective owners carry on below. And at the foot of this street the tomb of Champlain is said to have been found.

A little further on—and now we are underneath the castle, whose great supporting wall towers far above the houses—we come to a little square, a very little square, only a few square yards in extent, and being in reality more of a triangle, at one end of which stands the little old stone church of Notre Dame des Victoires, built by Champlain in 1615, and named partly in commemoration of the repulse of Admiral Sir William Phipps, who in the same year unsuccessfully bombarded the city. It is as small as its triangular square, and the sharp, high-pitched roof is surmounted at the front by a little cupola and a cross. We enter—for happily the Roman Catholic churches are always open—and see, in a little side-chapel, an image of the dead Christ laid in a glass case as if it was (as it is) a show wax-work. On the little altar are enormous silver candle-sticks—solid, we are assured—while a large silver hanging lamp, fretted and carved—also solid—depends from the ceiling. On the walls are queer old paintings of the Annunciation, and of that part of the crucifixion where Christ, nailed to the cross, is being raised with it. A peasant woman comes in and drones a prayer, which echoes in the silent place, and we go out.

Going down to the steamer wharf at which we had landed, we board a tubby little steamer, the North (there is also a South, and no more), and are paddled over to Point Levi, where we ascend the high bluff by a flight of steps, and obtain a fine view of the city across the half-mile or so of river.

The atmosphere at dinner was electric. For it seems that Aunt Eunice and the Professor had likewise stolen a march on Aunt Hepzibah, and disappeared, leaving the wretched Robert to sustain the entertainment of his wrathful spouse alone. "It was awful!" he afterwards confided to me. "She wouldn't budge from the hotel. Declared she didn't want to traipse around a city that was all up hill and down dale, looking at a lot of old houses and tinned churches *alone*—didn't seem to consider me anybody. But it's her way, you know," and he sighed resignedly.

We four met the storm with affected penitence. Avowed that we thought her too tired to go sight-seeing, and that we had missed her dreadfully. "But oh, wasn't it a pleasant miss!" said Jemima to me under her breath. Then I proposed that we all visit the Falls of Montmorency that afternoon, Jemima and I in a *calèche*, and the rest in a carriage, as being more comfortable. This met with the approval of Her Royal Highness, and was settled.

"Jemima," said I, as we left the dining-room, "get on your hat quick and meet me at the ladies' entrance;" and away she flew, good girl, without stopping to ask why, while I explained to Aunt Hepzibah that she (Jemima) and I would go and select the vehicles: and we went.

Proceeding to the cab-stand in the Cathedral square, we selected a *calèche* having the apparently fastest horse, and likewise an open barouche. The latter I ordered to be at the hotel *in half an hour*.

A noble vehicle is the *calèche*—the "one horse shay" of our forefathers. It is of solid build, 800 pounds in weight, and will last (perhaps) a century. Upon heavy wheels, four and a half feet high, is swung, on great leathern straps, a gig-like top, on the dash-board of which, on a narrow board and cushion, sits the driver, his legs dangling out over the shafts. The wheels and shafts and undergear are painted white, the body green, and the top black. We bargain to go to the Falls and back for \$2—regular price \$3, but hackmen not busy and eager in the

afternoon—enter, and dash down the steep, narrow streets, through the level of the Lower Town, and away on the hard, macadamized beach road, down the river.

“Oh, isn't this delicious!” cries Jemima, as the gig swings to and fro and from side to side on its leathern straps with the rapid motion, “it's like being out at sea;” and she gives me a furtive hug.

“My darling!” I ejaculate under my breath, “the driver!”

“Oh, is there a driver?” she says—he is exactly in front of us on the dash-board seat—“so there is! Well, I don't believe *he* would object to a very small expression of affection from *his* wife!” and she settles herself with a little bump at her end of the broad seat, and looks at me with defiant love.

On the way we pass the pretty villas of the townspeople, and numerous old French houses, all one-and-a-half stories high, with central-pointed, peaked roof and heavy eaves. Also through the village of Beauport, which is four miles long and consists of but a single street! As this street or road winds and turns, and as all the houses face exactly north and south, the angles presented to the street are numerous. As we bowl along we pass a very large man seated in a very small cart drawn by a yellow dog; and in an hour have accomplished the eight miles to the Falls. We register at the Falls Hotel, that our names may go down the ages; pay twenty-five cents for the privilege of passing through a wicket gate—we regret we didn't climb the fence—and walk to the Falls, preceded by a small boy who insists on showing us a path from which a blind man could not stray. I scent a fee in the person of that boy, and determining he shan't have it, resolutely ignore his very existence.

What a sight! At the head of a deep chasm of black, bare, wet and shining rock, a black and rapid river flows smooth and swift to the brink of its awful leap, and in one wild plunge falls, broken into a great white sheet of foam, two hundred and fifty feet to the boiling cauldron below, whence rises a cloud of flying spray far up into the air, drenching the jagged rocks, and sweeping down the chasm toward its mouth, through which the seething river passes also till, spreading and placid, as the chasm opens out, it is lost in the greater St. Lawrence.

From our point of view, a summer-house on the edge of the steep, we go down a wooden stairway 367 steps to near the bottom of the defile and the river. But I venturing up a little way toward the fall, the spirits of the place resent my intrusion, and send such a blast of spray at me that I retreat precipitately. Above the Falls stand, on either side of the little river, the piers of what was once a chain suspension bridge, built by an American. But the bridge broke, and eight people were swept over the Falls; which so dampened the enterprise that it broke also.

As we walk back, the still undiscouraged boy demands ten cents; whom my refusal and endeavor to show how it had not been earned so discourages, that he at last turns sadly away; when I immediately call him back and *present* him with a fee, to teach his youthful mind the law of supply and demand in the first place, and gratitude in the second.

As we are ready to go, Jemima writes, and entrusts to the now humbly docile small boy, a missive for Aunt Hepzibah, with an additional ten cents. In the missive she recites that, as we are going back a longer way, we regret to say that we cannot wait; and off we go, still alone.

Oh solitude of two! The trembling hearts first waking into love, strive for thy presence as the potent aid to gain that which they long to know is theirs. The overflowing hearts, bathed in the light of love, hail thee, the giver of the joys they own. While love shall reign in power upon his throne, thou art his minister to them who to him bow the knee. But when, dethroned, he leaves his kingdom of two hearts, thou art the feared, the shunned, the harbinger of ill, the minister of discord and the bane of time!

And so, in joyful solitude of two (the *cocher* doesn't count), we reach again the ancient, battlemented town. And we would "cheerfully recommend" to all future travelers, Talbotte Dijorvin, his *calèche* No. 400, and his horse.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CASTLE OF ST. LOUIS ; THE EXPECTED, AND HOME.

ON the 3d of July, 1608, Samuel Champlain founded the city of Quebec by building his *habitation* on a little level space at the foot of La Montagne, the precipitous end of Cape Diamond, which, as I have said before, is itself the abrupt termination of the narrow, high table-land which juts out into the river.

As time went on, the cliff above the little settlement was gradually fortified, until a citadel, from the plans of the famous Vauban, was built, the town meanwhile having crept up toward its protector, and having been surrounded by a strong wall, one gate of which, *La Porte St. Jean*, was built in 1694.

Time again went on, and the town and citadel successfully withstood many attacks by sea and land, from Indians, the English, and the English colonists in the Provinces to the south. At last, one day, a British fleet anchored in the river, and another siege was begun. The assailants were beaten at every point, and the Englishmen, under Wolfe, retired discomfited to their ships, leaving the triumphant French, under Montcalm, on the Montmorency River, nine miles from the town, where the battle had been fought.

But what are these shadowy forms which appear in the wild and stormy night, creeping up over the edge of the Castle cliff, and swarming upon the Plains of Abraham ? Wolfe and his men ! The enemy between Montcalm and his citadel ! And in the bloody struggle both commanders fall, the one to die on the field, the other to be carried to that little house at the corner of the crooked street, where he too passed away, glorying that he should not live to see the downfall of the town. And in five days—on the 18th of September, 1759—the Chevalier de Ramsey walked out of the castle, and Brigadier General Townsend walked in, and the power of France in the New World was broken.

As we stroll over the barren level of the Heights of Abraham, and look down that dreadful steep, we wonder how men unaided

from above—much less in a dark and stormy night, when the least sound would betray them to an enemy and to death—could scale that cliff, and fight the fight that made Wolfe and Montcalm immortal. And as we pass the monument that marks the spot where they fell, we wonder whether men who have thus left the world know and rejoice that their names and deeds can never die. A death to strive for, if they do! Oh, let us hope and believe they do. For how many of all the men who have left a deathless fame behind, have seen but the first faint glimmer of that fame—if even that—before they laid their bodies down to feed the flame which should become a never-waning sun?

On the way back toward the hotel, whence Jemima and I had, after breakfast, marched boldly out (not stolen away this time), with banners flying, upon which was emblazoned the legend, *We Will To Be Alone*, we come to the buildings of the Provincial Parliament, very long, very narrow, very high and very ugly, and built, apparently, to last till time and tide shall be no more, for the walls are of enormous thickness—the contractor's patriotism, no doubt. We enter, and move among the thousand and one little offices, where the interminable officials keep a truly imperial state, but are, we find, surprisingly polite, used as we are to the noble independence of officials at home.

Leaving, we reach, a little further on, the new-old St. John's gate—for it was rebuilt in 1869 by the town council, and exceedingly well rebuilt too—a sort of shallow, triple tunnel under the thick earth-and-stone wall; a large tunnel for the roadway, and two smaller ones for the sidewalks. On one side we ascend a narrow stone stairway leading up to an infinitesimal stone room over the gate, at the four bare walls of which we gaze with interest for a moment, imagining, meanwhile, that we might be David mourning over Absalom, and descending to the street, go a few steps, and, turning to the right, pass through a narrow gateway and the remains of an old wooden stockade, and walk up toward the Castle.

After following the narrow roadway through and between the lofty, massive walls of stone and earth, and passing several sally-ports, and a little vacant place, surrounded by the enormous walls, in which a horse is cropping the scanty grass, we come to the Chain Gate. Across a deep, narrow cut, turning abruptly to

the left, is stretched this double gate, made as if of chain mail, a sharp reminder to an invading enemy of the probable muskets and cannon just around the curve beyond; and although it is open, the effect is as if a grimly angry man was trying to smile—crawly, in the neighborhood of one's spine; and the frowning walls, and gloomy, narrow way, and utter silence, like the silence of expectancy, heighten that effect.

But coming now to the inner gate, the gate of the citadel proper, we see Mars at peace, lounging around in his scarlet jacket, two Marses, however, playing at war by marching up and down as sentries. To a thus playful Mars we present ourselves, who turns us over to an erst-lolling but now briskly-erect Mars (we scent a fee), who conducts us across the bare parade ground, pointing out the men's quarters in the wall itself (the stone house forming a part of the wall, and being turf-covered), through which the chimneys sprout up, the whole arrangement being admirably adapted to speedy and uninterrupted mortality among the inmates.

Passing one or two small stone houses—powder-houses, etc.—we come to the quarters of the commander-in-chief and the officers, a long, low, stone building, with ancient, enormous chimneys, built on the edge of the cliff overlooking the river, the outer wall being part of the castle wall. H. R. H. the Princess Louise and the much-married Lorne are at home, as the presence of the royal standard indicates—the Governor General takes up his quarters here when in Quebec; but we will not call—we really haven't time.

The King's Bastion—a semi-circular projection in the castle wall, from which we look three hundred and thirty-three feet sheer down to the river's edge. What a noble view! Before us lies the grand river over which ships are sailing and steamers passing up and down. Beyond, the high river bank and Point Levi, on which the houses of its village cluster; to the east of which lies Fort No. 1, to the west Forts Nos. 2 and 3, while beyond again stretches the great plain of field, farm, copse and forest, over which little villages are scattered, each with its heaven-seeking spire: and in the east, dividing the river into the north and south channels, sleeps the Isle of Orleans. Away below, at our feet, the houses cling like barnacles to the cliff, while at the projecting

wharves large vessels lie in the deep and placid water ; and over all arches a sky of summer blue, with here and there light, fleecy clouds, as if the cannons' smoke of all the years gone by still hovered far aloft, loth to leave the place of its booming birth.

Our soldier-guide is communicative. He informs us that the castle covers forty acres ; that it was rebuilt in 1823 from plans authorized by the Duke of Wellington ; that it cost \$25,000,000 ; that it now belongs to the Dominion government, and is garrisoned by two hundred men, of whom twenty-five are married ; that the Forts Nos. 1, 2 and 3 cost \$1,000,000 each, and that the castle is the second strongest fortress in the world, Gibraltar being first.

So we leave the bastion and its tenant, the great swivel-gun, which is ever watching and probably longing for some hostile fleet upon which to belch out flame and smoke and ball from its black throat, and feeing our guide to his entire satisfaction, reach again St. Louis Street, near the St. John's Gate. Strolling down toward the hotel we pass the Law Courts, uncomfortably crowded into a large, quaint old building standing a little back from the street, which, during his nefarious reign, the Intendant Bigot presented to his mistress, the beautiful Madame de Paen.

Passing by our hotel, we come to the building once the residence of the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, in which, in 1791, he gave those *petits soupers*, presided over by the lovely Madame St. Laurent, which electrified Quebec society, and too often attained a doubtful celebrity.

Walking still further toward the river, we reach the Post-Office, a handsome building, erected in 1873 on the site of the old building called the Chien d'Or, from the gilt dog which stood above the doorway, and which still stands over the doorway of the present building, on Buade Street ; and underneath it are the following lines :

*"Je suis un chien qui ronge l'os,
En le rongeant je prends mon repos,
Un temps viendra, qui n'est pas venu,
Que je mordray qui m'aura mordu."*

In this building, the local guide-book says, "Miles Prentice, who had come out as a sergeant in the 78th Regiment, under

Wolfe, opened an inn, to which resorted all the fashionables of the day, among whom was, in 1782, Captain, afterwards Admiral Nelson, then commanding H. M. S. Albemarle, of twenty-six guns. Miles had a niece whose charms so captivated the Captain, then when his vessel was about sailing from port, he clandestinely returned for the purpose of wedding her, which purpose was defeated by a merchant who, with the assistance of the boat's crew, forcibly carried the amorous Captain on board his vessel. This timely interference gained for England many a glorious victory, and lost for Lady Hamilton her good name," adds the compiler.

Further on, we come out upon the terrace, a broad, boarded esplanade and favorite promenade, part way up the cliff between the wharves and the Upper Town. Almost beneath us is the little church of Notre Dame des Victoires, with the market-place and the steamers' wharves beyond. Before us, and on either hand, stretches the broad river, sweeping grandly to the sea; and taking a last look up and down—drinking in the strange and varied beauty of the scene—we turn toward the hotel.

The last night of our stay had come, for on the morrow our faces were to be turned toward home and, for us two, the real life to be begun. What a melancholy time is the last evening of a pleasuring; and yet not wholly so, for anticipations of the loved delights of home, homely though they be, rise like growing flowers through the already withering herbage of the summer gone. Reminiscence sports in mirthful mood among the graver plans for time about to be, and what is past grows ever hazier and more indistinct, while that which is to come rises of firmer purpose and more clearly viewed. Bright pleasuring seems a summer day, to be enjoyed in lazy nooks without a thought but for the moment as it flies, while all the aim and work of life come like a breath of cold yet bracing wind, to set the sluggish blood a-dancing in our veins and nerve our thews for strong encounter with the world. And so we sat and chatted of pleasures gone, of those to come, of plans fulfilled and those yet to be made. And that strange brotherhood of travelers' joys and ills seemed to bind us all more closely, as of a nearer kin.

"Comrades," suddenly said the Professor, in a tone as if upon the electioneering stump, and clearing his throat nervously, and rising to his feet, "comrades, I have an announcement to make—

we have an announcement to make—that will—that may—although I hope it won't—disagreeably I mean—that is to say" (hurriedly) "I hope you will be pleased—I know I am, more than pleased"—and stopped short, transfixed by Aunt Hepzibah's eyes, which had caught and were now glaring into his own.

Aunt Hepzibah slowly rose from her chair, keeping the wretched Professor still on spit, and majestically stalked over to Aunt Eunice, whose face was like the red, red rose. Then turning swiftly, she swooped down upon the upturned ear-trumpet, and in an awful voice said, "Eunice, what does this mean?"

All down our spines, like millions of the Professor's bugs, crawled little tingling creeps, and we waited in an intensity of expectation for the answer which we already knew.

And then it was that love, though held within a heart no longer young, rose in its might and dared the world. Aunt Eunice arose, and taking the Professor's hand in both her own, said quietly, standing by his side, "We are engaged."

Within Aunt Hepzibah's opened mouth one could almost see the torrent of words struggling to escape. But only for an instant. Before the calm and almost rapt expression of the quiet face before her, from whose white cheeks and steady eyes the staying power of love shone forth, it sank and died. The grim mouth slowly closed. "You both are certainly of age," she said at length, and sat down.

A knock just then upon the door—oh blessed interruption! "Come in!" said Aunt Hepzibah sharply, and it opened, and before us appeared—and hand in hand—Bolos and Victorine.

"What is it?!" said Aunt Hepzibah, still more sharply.

"If you please, me lady, and you, sir," said Bolus, stiffening his neck into his stiffer collar, and addressing her and Uncle Robert particularly and the company generally, "me and Mrs. Jones, leastways Victorine, as I hought to 'ave said, we were thinkin' as 'ow single blessedness, as it 'adn't hought to be called, wasn't near so good as double blessedness; and so, pahssin' by the big church in the square, which it was our hafternoon out, and seein' a minister, leastways I should 'ave said a priest, in it, says I to Victorine, I says——"

"*Oh mesdames et messieurs,*" cried Victorine, sinking on her knees before the open door (which Bolus carefully shut to behind

her), "*Pardon ! Pardon ! His manière it ees si grand, si magnifique, like un seigneur !* I lof him ! I no can more live without him ! It must that I say that that *manière* appertains to me ! That I am to him ! I——"

"And so the priest married us, me lady and sir. But it isn't as 'ow it is our hintention to leave you, sir and madam" (to Aunt Eunice), "for as double, sir and madam, we think we'll be able to serve you double," concluded Bolus.

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The western sky begins to burn ; the rocky bluffs reflect the glow ; the deepening haze upon the fast receding town turns pink and crimson and a deeper red ; the castle wall throws back the sun's last beams ; a sunset-gun faintly booms farewell, and the ancient, crooked, jumbled, curious, old-world city sinks into the darkened east.

" Evening red and morning grey,
Helps the traveler on his way ;
But evening grey and morning red,
Brings down rain upon his head."

We shall have a fine day to-morrow.

"John," said Jemima, as we sat side by side in the sleeper, rushing toward the home that each was to make for the other, "John, I sometimes wonder if I am I, and I pinch myself to see—and all the pinches cry 'John !' Then they say, astonished like, 'Oh my !' Then I pinch them all again to see why they cry 'John' ; and they shout 'Love !' Then I put two and two together, and I read, 'John, oh my Love !' Then I know that I am I—for I love you."

CHAPTER XXV.

EPILOGUE.

It is the twilight hour: day into night
Fades softly, and the thousand tongues of toil
Have ceased their clamor, and the quiet streets
Echo but scattered footsteps homeward bound.
Upon the wall the flickering firelight plays,
And shadows strange, grotesque, born of its flames,
Hide in the darkened corners, and dart out
In noiseless sallies, and again retreat
Within their holds, but to come forth again
And dance in glee o'er ceiling, wall and floor.
The crackling flames curl o'er the burning wood,
And leap and gambol, and make efforts vain
To scale the wide-mouthed chimney and peer out
Upon the world. The blazing oak logs hiss,
And send forth flying sparks with loud report;
And as a deeper red their bodies grow,
Crumble and fall, and in their ruin build
Bright, fairy castles, turreted and spired,
That scintillate and glisten as they fall
To rise again in new and stranger shapes:
Deep caves appear, elf-hewn, of sinuous form,
With stalagmite and stalactite adorned,
That swarm with silent figures, and with gems
Sparkle throughout their tiny corridors.

The flying shadows and the curling flames
Seem filled with wordless joy; for ten long years
Have passed, since solemn words and golden ring
Made one of twain, and of two separate lives
Did one blest life incarnate, one great joy,
Which through the vanished years has known nor jar
Nor discord, but, as some still stream, has run

'Twixt quiet banks, receiving little brooks
That tumbling come in noisy turbulence,
And lose their little cares within its depths.

Ten years to-night! And yet but for grey threads
Sprinkled but lightly through the locks of each,
And lines a little deeper on the brows,
And cheeks a little faded, and the hands
Somewhat more thin, with higher-swelling veins,
And more inured to life, one could not think
That the two figures there before the fire
Had seen of married life and cares ten years.

As lovers sit they; she with low-bowed head
Resting upon the shoulder that had borne
For her the heat and burden of the days
Throughout these ten long years; he with his arm
About her waist, more matronly than when
He clasped it, and their love's first burning kiss
Pressed long upon her shyly willing lips,
And with his eyes bent down upon her face,
As beautiful to him now as of yore.
As beautiful? more beautiful; for she
Whose love for him was mirrored in that face,
Was his own wife, tried by a thousand tests
And not found wanting. What to him that time
Had in some measure marred her rounded form
As judged by others' eyes? As youthful grace
Had fled, another grace, more true, more fair,
Had shone forth from the eyes, lit up the cheeks,
Ennobled, beautified the whole anew—
That grace so fair, so pure, of mother-love.

As on their faces danced the firelight, he
Drew closer to him yet the loving form
So dear to him, and while a sweet content
Spread wholly o'er his face and lit it up
With light far brighter than from flickering fire,
Said softly, bending down his head to touch
With quiet kiss the brow so calm and white
That rested on his shoulder, "My dear love,

It is ten years to-night! Ten years—how short
And yet how long! How long when we look back
Upon the day that made us man and wife,
And yet how short to measure all the bliss
That has been ours since that most blessed day.”
She looked up at him; and the same content
That brightened all his face shone on hers too,
And showed more plain than words that to her heart
That day was counted also blest indeed.
“Dear heart”—the hand which lay in his did press
An answer quick responsive to the words—
“Dost thou remember, in that distant time,
How all our sky seemed dark above our heads,
Hung thick with clouds that hid our wedded sun?
How the long years we feared must intervene
To bar that present from our shining goal,
Seemed all so long, so fraught with wretchedness,
That, though our faith was strong, it almost failed?
Till—thou rememb’rest, love?”—again the hand
That lay in his pressed quick a soft response—
“Thou dost remember, on one summer day,
A cloud came floating through the sunlit blue,
And for a moment hid the orb of day,
And turned a sombre face upon our gaze,
But all around was haloed with the light
That streamed upon it from the hidden sun.
And we thus learned that, driven by His will,
Our sombre cloud should pass from off our sun.
So, trusting in His guidance, we were led
Unto that hour gone by ten years to-night;
When, with our love as deep as on the day
We told it first within the chestnut grove,
We knelt before the altar side by side,
And rose, no more as twain, but one for life.”

He paused; and straight the fire which, till this time,
Had quenched its flames, and stilled the hissing wood,
And sunk in deep-red embers, not to miss
A word of all the loving tale he told,
Sprang into life, and roared up toward the roof,
And sang in glee, that these two, through such straits,

Had wedded been at last, and lived to bless
The house and all around them with their lives.
And all the shadows too, who, with the fire,
Had listened with intentest ears, and had—
Such was their boldness—come from corners dark,
And hovered round his head, crept to his feet,
And peered into his face to catch his words,
Now joined in maddest whirl around the room,
And chased each other from the ceiling down,
And sped on noiseless feet across the floor,
All wild with joy that they too, with the fire,
Should be existent with these happy lives.
And when, with welling tears of utter peace
And full contentment, she about his neck
Flung both her arms, and pressed her lips to his,
And strained him to her bosom, then the fire
Grew dim, and all the shadows clustering round,
Enfolded them within their sheltering wings,
To shut out from a love as pure as this
The baneful contact of a prying world.

“And now, my wife—the dearest name on earth—
Of all our life since that so happy day
Thou knowest well, for never, to this hour,
Have we been parted for so long a time
As one whole day. Our gracious Lord hath blessed
With many mercies all these ten long years;
And though He, for our good, hath chastened us
With sorrows, yet, strong in our love, upheld
By it and by His arm, we two have walked
Adown the hill of life, thus, hand in hand.”

Once more he paused, for there had reached his ear
A little, sleepy cry. She from his side
Starts quickly up, and all the mother-love
Shines in her face. “It is the baby, dear,
And I must go, to come back soon,” she said.
So sat he still before the fire, and gazed
Upon its embers. But where’er he looked
He saw nought but her image; for the fire—
So well it loved her—built up of its coals

Nought but her semblance : showed her to his eyes
Now, as when first he saw her, young and fair,
With cheeks that bore the sweet contrasted hues
Of rose and lily, and in maiden grace
Pictured her to him in remembered scenes,
Till he too, in its glow, seemed young again,
Feeling his heart throb as, in bygone days,
It throbbed at merest sight of her he loved :
Brought her before him now, as when, one day,
He saw her lying, and upon her breast,
Clasped in her arm, a little chubby form ;
And saw the new-born love within her face,
The doubly tender love, that of the wife
And mother : now he saw her as she bent
Above his bed of pain, and smoothed his brow
With touch so gentle of her soft, cool hand,
And kissed his burning lips, and with bright words
Cheered the long hours, and made the darkened room
Beam brightly with her presence and her smile.
And now the picture changes and the fire
Builds of its glowing embers brilliant rooms,
Filled with a multitude in gay attire :
And there he sees her, queen of all the feast ;
The centre of a gay, admiring throng
Who hang upon her words and smile their praise
At her bright sallies : but he sees that she
Looks first for commendation from his eyes ;
And gaining that—not difficult to gain—
Looks a contentment that the others' praise
Had failed to win, though phrased in honeyed words.

So many were the pictures that the fire—
Oh knowing fire !—held up to his rapt gaze,
That not until a little laughing face
Was placed before his own, and its wee lips
Had stammered “ Papa,” did he know that she
Had softly come, and with her, on her arm,
The youngest of the little brood of three
That blessed their home and brightened all its rooms
With their glad faces. Soon close by his side,
In her accustomed place, he seated her ;

And with the little pledge of their great love
Asleep upon her breast, they spoke again
Of present and of future ; while the fire
Beamed on them lovingly, and softly kissed
The mother and her babe with warmest glow.
And all the shadows clustered round again,
And hovered o'er them, and with noiseless wings
Encircled them, and, with the fire, called down
Upon their heads all blessings rich and rare ;
Because by these two lives had been raised up
A household hearthstone, by whose glowing rays
They, and whoe'er approached its gracious beams,
Found love and comfort, peace and happiness.



SAVOIR VIVRE.

ANALYSIS of the problem of life reveals no more interesting nor curious study than that involved in the question presented to all men by its very conditions: "How to live?" By this is meant not merely the physical struggle for existence on our planet, but rather those provisional habits which tend to make life successful, both individually and in its social connections.

Unfortunately even our most thoughtful men, in the hurry and urgency of professional or mercantile pursuits, often neglect to appreciate the importance of these things until life has so far advanced that the omissions of the past cannot be supplied by present attempts, or else that either ability or opportunity are lacking to carry out the belated suggestions of experience and observation.

It has been said that until a man is forty he exists for himself, and that after that age he lives for others. With increasing knowledge he recognizes the fact that whatever good can be done, or whatever satisfaction realized, must come from benefits conferred, rather than from advantages obtained.

The best deserved monuments are not built to those whose lives have been spent in *getting*, but to those who have lived for the sake of *giving*. They are for the brave, the unselfish, the devoted. It is such as these whose memories gratitude keeps green. Not that any man should live for the sake of his own monument; such a life in its career of vanity would rarely succeed in accomplishing its own empty object. But that a man should so live as to be thought worthy of the respect and honor of the good men who survive

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him, we all agree to and believe. Undoubtedly the greatest weakness that besets many an otherwise estimable man is procrastination, that undefined idea of something, he knows not what, which makes him inertly believe that his advancement or enrichment—the needed provision for himself or his household—will come in the not distant future, and without his own present effort to promote that wished-for end. He has a visionary impalpable feeling that success awaits him at some yet undiscovered turn in his career, and that he has but as heretofore, to continue his indefinite path to come up with it; or he flatters his fancy with the idea that some special opportunity will present itself to enable him to seize, with sudden grasp, the prize for which others throughout a lifetime must contend.

Such men mean well in lives which nevertheless are too often barren of good. They are not so narrow as they are improvident. They are emphatically of the sort which never are but always to be blessed.

Again, the open-handed, generous way of living which marks the course of many men who are esteemed by their fellows and oftentimes admired is likewise to be condemned, as not only unphilosophical but almost carelessly criminal. A sad instance of the weakness and folly of such a reckless life was illustrated but a few days ago in the daily press. A man, well and kindly known, had shot himself, leaving—and it was all he did leave—to his widow a tearful farewell in which this passage occurs:

“Life has been a struggle with me. I am near its end. You have been a true and noble woman and have borne with me patiently. I have been a busy man—generous to a fault; my heart has been bigger than my purse; no one has ever been turned away from me in hunger, and many of those have been

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aided who had no claim on my charity. I leave my dear wife in the hands of her good and precious God."

Now this man's economy began when, life ending, he turned the care of his wife over to the Lord. Generosity is always admirable, but that reckless liberality of life which leaves a starving family to the "care of the Lord" may well make the judicious grieve, and should cause its previous participants to shudder.

Death is the unrelenting sneer which mocking Nature casts at life. It is indeed appointed unto all men, but how few meet that fell appointment prepared either to go or to leave behind them those who remain to mourn.

When it was reported of that clever but selfish diplomat, Talleyrand, that on his death-bed he had received the consolations of the church, a witty French woman exclaimed, "Well, at last he dies like a man who understands living."

Civilization and her daughter Science have found the means whereby the dying may depart with the deep and earnest consolation that they leave behind them a secure provision for those whose trusting love and dependence have been a true source of earthly happiness. In life as in death they proved how well indeed they knew to live.

By this means one hundred thousand human lives are joined in the continuance of a fund to which they yearly contribute twenty millions of dollars, and all to prove how nobly they understand living for the sakes of their nearest and dearest ones. This fund, established over forty years ago, has accumulated and paid out to its contributors the enormous amount of over two hundred and fifty millions of dollars. The deaths of the men who founded this wonderful enterprise were not expedited by their own hands, and the Providence to whose care their families were

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left was supplemented through their own loving provision by the ready means which a cold world demands for the support of the widow and the orphan.

This great Fund—steadily and solidly growing and still steadily disbursing—now amounts to one hundred and twenty millions of dollars, safely and profitably invested. It constitutes the assets of the greatest financial institution in all the world—The Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York. Those who live insured in it live well to that extent, and those who die insured by it die to live enshrined in the grateful memories of their loving and best beloved.





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